

This is Part 2 of the following (Catholic Communion defended)

ACCOUNT

OF THE

REASONS

WHY THE

TWELVE ARGUMENTS,

Said to be Dr. JOHN OWEN's,

Change not my Judgment about Communion
with Parish-Churches.

By RICHARD BAXTER.

K with the following.

1 Thel. 5. 21. Prove all thing: hold fast that which is good.

1 Pet. 3. 15. Be ready always to give an answer to every man who asketh you a Reason of the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear.

Gal. 2. 11. 12, 13, 14. When Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed. For ——— he withdrew and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision. And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him, insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulations. But when I saw that they walked not uprightly, &c.

Acts 11. 2, 3. They that were of the circumcision contended with Peter, saying, Thou wentest in to men uncircumcised, and didst eat with them.

2 Tim. 2. 20. In a great house there are not only Vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honour, and some to dishonour.

LONDON:

Printed for Tho. Parkhurst, at the Bible and Three Crowns, in Cheap-side,
near Mercers-Chappel. 1684.

THE PREFACE.

R Eader, when the last sheet of the foregoing Paper was Printed, I received these Twelve Arguments, famed to be Dr. John Owen's: Whether Fama truly or falsely father them, I know not: It is the Cause that I am concerned in. After Three and Twenty years practice since the Bishops return, I was by Accusations, called to give the Reasons of my Practice, which yet I had often done in part before. They said, That my communicating in the Parish-Churches, even when my self and others were maliciously persecuted by a sort of proud and worldly Clergy-men, did more harm than ever I did good: Tho I am bound with meekness to render them a Reason of my practice; I have found by experience, that neither side can bear the account which they call for. Some wise and good men will blame me for making our differences to be so much known, especially for remembering old miscarriages: I obey my Conscience: All these things are commonly known already; and we hear sharply of them from God and Man, because Men bear not our Repentance, but our Justification: Had we confessed, God is faithful to forgive. Impenitence threatens our yet greater suffering. When we give glory to God, and take shame to our selves, our hopes will revive. Nothing brings so much scandal, and awakes Enemies against us, as owning sin, or hiding it. I durst no longer see Thousands of good Christians misguided into mistakes, and like to be ruined for them, and hereby hardening their Persecutors, rejoicing the Papists, who joyn with them in Separation, reducing the Protestant Religion into corners, and giving it up as publick to——we may know whom; censuring one another, and dividing on these mistakes, and fathering all this on God: I say, I durst not stand by in silence to see all this, no more than to see men drowning, or the City on fire, without endeavouring to save men. It is an exceeding great quiet to my Conscience, under all the Confusions and Divisions that have befallen us, that in 1660, and 1661. I plainly and earnestly foretold the King and Bishops of them, and did my best to have prevented them.

And the Author that I deal with, necessitateth me to recite the late fruits of Separation, in pulling down all Governments, casting out all the Ministers in Wales, and were near casting down those of England, with Tyrdes and Universities, persecuting and killing godly men, and satering all on God, and was flying from the Bishops when they had opened them the door to return. He layeth his main Cause on the ill fruits of Liturgies (which indeed are rather the fruits of Pride and Malignity), and constraineth me to shew the fruits of Separation. I dare not bury that in silence which God so dreadfully disowned by their own dissolution, without any blood; and that when multitudes are running into the old error, by mistaking the Judgment of the Nonconforming Ministers, thinking that they took that for unlawful which they did not, and condemning all the excellent old Nonconformists and Conformists, and almost all the Churches on Earth.

Let wiser men deal wiser: I use the best wisdom that I have.

It's true, that abundance of good people fear and distaste Communion in the Liturgy: What wonder, when such Reasonings as these Twelve Arguments (which how gross soever, poor people have not the skill to answer), persuade them it is a false Worship, and heinous sin; and say others, Idolatry. They are conquered as the Mexicans were by the Spaniards, by the frightful roaring of their Cannons; the Militia used, Acts 15. 1, 2. [Ye cannot be saved]; and as the Pope conquered Kings and Kingdoms, by threatning to keep them out of Heaven: Even as such men tell me, that they medicate their Wines with Arsenick and Mercury, I am afraid to drink them, which before I feared not; so are honest souls affrighted from Liturgies and Communion. How much in them I dissent from my self, I have openly intimated to the World: But he that will joyn in no good that is met by men with faultiness and evil, must separate from all the World, and all from him: But how will he separate from himself? England in her Articles and Ordination, professeth to cleave to Scripture-sufficiency, as being the Protestant Religion. I go to joyn in this profest Religion: If the Speaker of any side add any unwarrantable passages by book, or without book, let him answer for them; I owe them not: Did my presence own all that I hear. I would joyn with no man living. The Lord fit us for a wiser and more loving World.

The Twelve Arguments said to be *Dr. Owens*, impartially considered.

D. O.

Posit. It is not Lawful for us to go to, and joyn in Publick Worship by the Common Prayer; because that Worship it self, according to the Rule of the Gospel, is not Lawful.

1. *Ans.* **I** Shall use the same Method that he hath used, and first give you my Positions, and then the supposed Matter of Fact; and then consider his Arguments.

Posit. It is not only Lawful, but a Duty for those that cannot have better publick Church-worship without more hurt than benefit, and are near a competent Parish Minister, to go to, and joyn in Publick Worship, performed according to the Liturgie, and in Sacramental Communion: And for those that can have better, to joyn sometime with such Parish Churches, when their forbearance scandalously seemeth to signifie, that they take such Communion for unlawful; and so would tempt others to the same Accusation, and uncharitable Separation.

The History of the Matter of Fact must be premised for the right deciding of the Case; which is as followeth.

1. God hath commanded us to Preach, Pray, Praise him, and Administer his Sacraments and Discipline; and hath told us what Doctrine we must preach, what things we must pray and give thanks for, and what Sacraments and Discipline we must Administer: But he hath not told us, in what Words we must do these, nor in what Posture, nor in what particular Method, nor whether we must use oftent the same words, or various, nor whether they shall be before prepared, or spoken immediately without preparation of words, nor whether written or remembered; nor whether prepared and composed by our selves, or by others, with such like.

2. God prescribed divers Forms of Prayer, Confession and Praise, to the Jews in *Moses* Law; and a Prophetical Song, which they were all to learn, *Deut.* 32.

3. The Psalms were a chief part of the *Jews* Liturgie, in which there are many Forms of Prayer and Praise; some made by *David*, some by *Asaph*, some by others, and some in or after the Captivity, no one knoweth by whom. And those Psalms were not in Metre, and sung in Tunes like ours now, but loudly said over.

4. *John* taught his Disciples to pray, not only as to the Matter, but as to the Words; and so did Christ his Disciples at their Request, who had not then the after-pouring out of the Spirit (nay, knew not that Christ must die for Sin, rise and reign in Heaven, &c.) and he said, *When ye pray, say, Our Father, &c.* tho not tying them only to these words, yet giving them a Form of Words to be used as they had occasion, as well as a perfect Directory for Method.

5. Christ himself joyned with the *Jews* in Synagogues and Temple, when they used Forms, and so did the Apostles; and never blamed them for the use of such Forms.

6. Christ prescribed a Form of Words in Baptism, and in the Administration of the Lords Supper, and used a Hymn in Form.

7. There are divers Forms of Prayer and Thanksgiving in the New Testament, in *Luke* 1, &c. 2. and the *Acts*, and *Pauls Epistles*, and the *Revelations*, which its Lawful and Laudable to use.

8. We are commanded to use Psalms and Hymns, and Spiritual Songs, which are Forms of Prayer and Praise (and was not then in Rhime.) And it was not every one in the Church that composed these *Extempore*, but some made them for the rest to use: And if none impose them (by Office, Authority or Perswasion) the Churches will never use the same. Christians in the primitive ages of the Church, were known to the Heathen by their constant use of such Hymns sung to Christ, and of Christ.

9. The Churches from Christs time to this, had a Creed or Form of sound Words, or necessary Articles of Faith, which they used in Catechising and in Baptism, which were a great means to keep out Heresie; and Church-Tyranny and Heresie were the Introducers of all their Alterations.

10. The Lay-Christians of the first Ages were so full of Zeal, that they would have taken it ill to have been forbidden to speak their Answering and Consenting parts in the Church (as the *Jews* before did) and as now we would take it ill for the Minister to Sing alone, and forbid the People: And tho the scantness of History in the first two Ages tell us not what words were then used as a Liturgy (and no doubt but praying by Habit was used chiefly) yet some few Sentences that are recorded, tell us that they used some Forms.

11. *Constantine* himself made Prayers for his Soldiers, and every Bishop then used what Prayers he thought best in his own Church, and composed himself the Forms which he used constantly, till Heresie and weakness of Ministers caused a Council to decree, That every one should first shew his Form of Prayer to the Synods, to be examined and approved before he used it.

12. I donot read or hear of many Churches on earth at this day, that used not a Liturgie, except *New England*, and some Non-conformists here: Nor did I ever read that any one Church on earth for a thousand Years after Christs time, did ever scruple it or speak against it (to my remembrance) so that it was for many Ages the the practice of the whole Church on earth. At this day the *Greeks, Armenians, Muscovites, Georgians, Circassians, Mengrelians, Indian and Persian Christians, the Syrians, Abasines, Egyptians*, all the Countreys that have *Nestorians, Jacobites, Maronites*, beside the *Papists*, have a Liturgie very far more faulty than ours: Even those ascribed to *James, Mark, Chrysostom*. The *Lutherans* have one, (or divers in divers Countreys.) And those called the Reformed have one, tho' a shorter and more simple, in *France, Geneva, Holland, the Palatinate, Helvetia, &c.*

13. The Nonconformists in *England* were generally for the Lawfulness of a Form or Liturgie, and for Communion of the Parish Churches therein, in the days of King *Edward the Sixth, Queen Elizabeth, King James, and King Charles the First*: And wrote more against Separation by far than the Bishops did, as is yet visible in their Books; specially *Carrwright, Hilderham, Bradshaw, Poyer, Gifford, Brightman, Bayne, Rathband, John Ball, &c.*

14. Those then counted the Fathers of *Independency*, were of the same mind, for Parish Communion, and against Separation, Mr. *Jacob, Bradshaw, Ames*, (see his First and Second *Manuduction*.)

15. Yea, those call'd *Brownists* or *Separatists* were for Communion in the Liturgie in the usual parts, and for the truth of those Parish Churches that had good Ministers: I have cited their own words before, tho' all of them were not of the same mind.

16. The Martyrs in *Queen Marys* days had a chief hand in composing our Liturgie, and rejoyced in it, and worshipped God according to it. And none that I read of separated for this from the rest as false Worshipers.

17. When before 1639. there were but about one or two Nonconformable Ministers for each County; if it had been unlawful to Communicate in the publick Churches with the Liturgy, all *England* must have lived like Atheists without any Church Worship, for want of Ministers, except about thirty or forty. Yea, those few kept up no usual

usual Church Worship, except those of them that by connivence had small Chappels or peculiars. And of them most used much of the Liturgy.

18. All the Congregations of the Nonconformists in *England*, that I have heard (save one now broken) not counting such as Quakers, &c.) have used, and do use, stinted, imposed forms of Worship to this day, and therefore judg it not unlawful, meerly as forms, or as imposed.

1. Parents teach their Children a form of words in Catechisms, in Prayers, in giving Thanks for their Meat; and impose these on them.
2. Ministers impose on the Assemblies, their own method and words in Prayer, which are a form to the people; yea, and a form which they know not, till they hear it, and have no time to examine it, while it floweth from the Speaker. And their Sermons are imposed forms of Doctrine; (sometimes written also, and read).
3. Few men that retain any Sobriety in Religion, are against the Creed, to be used as a form of Confession of Faith.
4. The Independents drew up at the *Savoy*, about 1658. or 1659. a form of Confession of their Faith and Discipline.
5. They attempted (*Dr. Owen*, *Mr. Nye*, *Dr. Goodwin*, *Mr. Sid. Sampson*, *Dr. Cheynell*, and others), by appointment of a Committee of Parliament, to have drawn up a Catalogue of Fundamentals, to have been imposed for consent on all that should be tolerated in the Land in Church-Worship: they are yet to be seen in Print. (But Arch-bishop *Usher* being chosen for one, and refusing, and I being by his consent substituted in his room, broke that attempt; finding that their Fundamentals were lamentably composed, and that Christianity was not an unknown thing, and that Baptism, the Creed, Lords Prayer, and Decalogue, were a far better Catalogue of Fundamentals than theirs).
6. We all constantly use an English form of Translation of the Scripture, where all the *English* words, the division of Chapters and Verses, are mans invention, imposed on all.
7. We all use constantly forms of Confession, Prayer, Thanksgiving, and Praise in the singing of Psalms; where, when *David's* and the *Jews* Psalms are used, the Translation, (or rather Paraphrase) the rhyme or meters, and the tune, are humane and imposed: And the Separatists themselves make no question; but other Psalms, (such as that of *Ambrose*, &c.) more suited to the State of the Gospel Church, may be fitly used, as *Paul* requireth, which must be composed by man, and imposed on the Churches, or never unanimously used. Our common use of singing Psalms and Hymns, is the use of stinted imposed forms.
8. He that doth not celebrate Baptism, and the Lords Supper often in words of the same signification, shall corrupt those Sacraments by his affectation of variety of words; the matter being the same.

same. 9. No man knoweth before-hand, whether a Minister hath studied and fore compsed his Prayer or Sermon, and yet all joyn with him. 10. Many affect to compose all their Prayer in Scripture Sentences, which do but make up one form of many.

19. When the King came in, the Ministers of *London* were invited to attempt a Concord with the Bishops, and they offered to joyn in the use of the Liturgy, if it were corrected: And they offered Additional Forms, or a Reformed Liturgy, which they would have used.

I know it will be objected, That I plead in this but for my own works: But I answer, 1. The Exceptions and Emendations of the old Liturgy offered, was none of my work. 2. And the new one which I drew up by their appointment, had their common review and consent.

It will be said, That these were not all the then Nonconformists: I answer, It was the main Body of the *London* Ministers; and it was as many as would meet about it, when they were desired to come to *Sion Colledge*, and after they Printed a Thanksgiving to the King for his Declaration; so that then they were not against all imposed Liturgies; so that the Imposition had no unmercifulness in it.

20. The forreign Churches (in *Holland, France, Germany, &c.*) are so much used to pray in the same form of words, that if they were put to do all *ex tempore*, it would be lamentably done by most, even far worse than it is.

21. I have formerly told the world, That many of the most noted Nonconformists in *London*, met and concluded for communicating in the Parish Churches, about 1664. And two things done by the Conformists stopt them: One was a storm then arising against those that could not do it, which they feared to seem to countenance by their compliance: And Plague and Fire interrupting the purposes of some. The *Oxford* Act of Confinement made it unpracticable; because, to be seen in a Church would have cast them six Months in the Goal with Malefactors.

22. Being thus hindered and delayed; the King's Declaration after giving them liberty to have Assemblies otherwise, they were then kept from the Parish-Churches by their labours with their own Flocks, as the Parish-Ministers be from hearing one another.

23. Some in the City, and more in the Countries, all this while went constantly to the Parish Churches before this liberty, and as oft as they could after, lest they should by their practice, draw the people to think that they took it for unlawful.

24. Others.

24. Others that thought it lawful, judg it not necessary when they might do that which they judged better : And finding many Hearers offended at it, were loath to displease them, and bear their censures ; till at last, by long disuse, the people thought their judgment was against it : And when necessity driveth them to declare their judgments, and change their practice, their Hearers (and their Adversaries) call them unconscionable Temporizers.

25. Tho Mr. Tombs wrote for Parish-Communion, few *Anabaptists* followed him ; and tho Mr. Nye wrote for hearing the Parish-Ministers, few *Independents* consented : But some of their Ministers took the advantage of the foresaid forbearance of others, and so brought Separation to pass for a common duty with many : And renewed sufferings made it easier to draw men from the Communion of those that they so much suffered by ; following the example of St. Martin, and saying, That persecutors obtruded without their consent, were none of their Pastors ; and that it's no Schism not to communicate with the Church, which causelessly hath, *ipso facto*, excommunicated them in *Can. 6, 7, 8, &c.* This is the true promised History.

D. C.

Some things must be premised to the confirmation of this Position.

1. *The whole System of Liturgical Worship, with all its inseparable dependences, are intended ; For as such it is established by Law, and not in any part of it only ; as such it is required that we receive it, and attend unto it. It is not in our power, it is not left to our judgment or liberty to close with, or make use of any part of it, as we shall think fit.*

There are in the Mass-book many Prayers directed to God only by Jesus Christ ; yet it is not lawful for us thereon to go to Mass, under a pretence only of joyning in such lawful Prayers.

As we must not affect their Drink-Offerings of Blood, so we must not take up their names in our lips, Psal. 16. 4. Have no communion with them.

§ 2. I Shall now examine the Doctor's Premises.

To the first I answer, 1. If he will include all that is in the Liturgy, the Nonconformists confess, that there is somewhat in it which they dissent from, as unjustifiable : And so there is in all mens Worship of God.

2. He intimateth, That it is not in our power to close with
I. Error. some, and not withall. This is his First Error.

Tho Man give us no such power, God doth : As it is in my power to believe all that one speaketh truly and well, and not that which he speaketh amiss. I am not bound to own all that any Preacher or Priest shall say in the Church. God put it in the Disciples power to beware of the Leaven of the Pharisees, and yet to hear them. *Proving all things, is not approving all things.*

2. Tho the Mass have many good Prayers, the corruption by twisted Idolatry and Heresie, maketh Communion there unlawful: *Hraibem* and *Turks* have good Prayers. Prove any such Heresie or Idolatry in the Church-Worship by the Liturgy, and we will avoid it. But if I may joyn with your own good Prayers and Preaching, notwithstanding your many Failings, and such Errors as are here pleaded for, why not with others?

3. *Psal. 16. 4. is too sadly abused, which speaketh only of sacrificing to, and worshipping false Gods.*

2. It is to be considered as armed with Laws: (1.) Such as declare and enjoyn it as the only true Worship of the Church: (2.) Such as prohibit, condemn, and punish all other ways of the Worship of God in Church Assemblies: By our commission and conjunction in it, we justify those Laws.

§ 3. **T**hat our Communion justifieth all the Laws that impose the Liturgy, yea, the penal severities, is too gross an Error to be written with any shew of proof. What if the Creed or Lord's Prayer were too rigorously imposed, or Presbytery or Independency, must we forbear them, or justify the Law? I can prove Episcopacy excluded too severely by the Covenant: But every one that is against it, justifieth not the imposition of that Covenant in that rigor. What if rigorous Laws should make it imprisonment or death, not to use our Translation of the Scriptures, our approved Catechisms, our Metre and Tunes of the *Psalms*, not to put off the Hat at Prayer, not to meet at the appointed Place and Hour, &c. Doth every man justify the rigor of the imposition, who obeyeth the Law? Then a rigorous Law-maker may take away our Christian Liberty, by commanding us to use such things too strictly: yea, he may turn Duty, by too strict commanding it, into Sin. These are your unproved Premises.

§ 4. *Comprehensiveness, and such like* D. C.

D. O.

3. *This conjunction in Communion by the Worship of the Liturgy, is the Symbol, Pledge and Token of an Ecclesiastical Incorporation with the Church of England in its present Constitution: It is so in the Law of the Land; It is so in the Canons of the Church; It is so in the common Understanding of all men: And by these Rules must our Profession and Practice be judged, and not by any reserves of our own, which neither God nor good men will allow of. Wherefore,*

§ 4. **T**O the Third Premise, I answer, 1. The Church of England is an ambiguous word: 1. As it signifieth a part of the Universal Church, agreeing in Faith, one God, one Christ, and all essential to the Church; so we desire the honour of being parts of it. 2. And also as it is a Christian Kingdom under one King. 3. And as it is a Confederacy of many Churches to keep Concord in lawful Circumstantials as well as Integrals. In all these senses it is a lawful Association. 4. But if any Church go beyond these bounds, and on good pretences shall agree upon any error or evil, it is a mistake to hold, That all that incorporate with them in the Three foresaid lawful respects, do therefore
IV. Error. confederate with them in their error. This is your Fourth Error.

I will give you a general Instance, and a particular one: 1. You cannot name me one combined company of Churches from the Apostles days till now, that had no error. You take Episcopacy to be an error in the very constitution: Name one Church from the 3^d or 4th Century, for a thousand years, that was without it, either Catholicks or Hereticks, that were indeed a Church: And must Christians have forbore associating with any of them? Or might not own the good in their Associations, without owning the evil?

2. The Independents gathered a Synod at the Savoy, and there among their Doctrinals or Articles of Faith, laid down Two Points expressly contrary to Scripture: 1. That it is not Faith, but Christ's Righteousness that we are justified by, whereas it is both; and the Scripture often saith the contrary. 2. That *Christ's Righteousness imputed, is our sole Righteousness*: Whereas the Scripture doth many hundred times name also our inherent and practical Righteousness. I asked some yet living, why they consented to these, and did not rather expound the Scripture than deny it? And they said, That it was Dr O's doing. Now doth it follow, that every one that there confederated with you, owned these errors?

The

The Churches of *Helvetia* are a very honourable part of the Reformed Churches: They are commonly such as we call *Erasian*; for no Discipline but the Magistrates: Are ail that confederate with them as Churches, guilty of this error?

2. But I further distinguish between the many Parish-Churches, and the Dioceſan, and the Church of *England*, as conſtituted of ſuch Dioceſan Churches. The Old Nonconformiſts commonly owned the Parish-Churches (and the Church of *England* as made up of ſuch), but not the Dioceſan. This they openly profeſſed. It is therefore another of your Miſtakes, that owning the Parish-Churches and Worſhip, is an owning of the preſent Dioceſan Conſtitution.

Alſo it is your Miſtake to ſay, That Communion by the Liturgy is the Symbol and Pledg of the foreſaid Incorporation. V. Error. in the Church of *England* in its preſent conſtitution: It is only a part of the Communion commanded, but no ſuch Symbol: VI. Error. For, 1. The Rulers openly declare, that they take multitudes to be none of their Church, who joyn in the Liturgy: And it is ſubſcribing, declaring, and ſwearing Obedience, which is the Symbol: yea, they ex-communicate many that come to the Liturgy-Service.

2. And many come to it who openly diſown the Dioceſan preſent conſtitution: So did, as I ſaid, the Old Nonconformiſts; and many Forreigners, *French, Dutch, &c.* that come over hither.

3. If one may joyn in Communion of Worſhip with a *Presbyterian, Independent or Anabaptiſt-Church*, without owning the Errors of their conſtitution, then ſo one may with a Parish-Church: But, &c.

You miſtake when you ſay, It is ſo by the Law of the Land: You miſtake again, when you ſay, It is ſo by the Canon: You miſtake again, when you ſay, It is ſo in the common underſtanding of all. I formerly inſtanced in one of the ſharpeſt Nonconformiſts, Old Mr. *Humbrey Fen*, of *Coventry*, who would ſay aloud, *Amen*, to all the *Common-Prayer*, ſave that for the Biſhops; by which all there knew his mind: Whether it were right or wrong, I now VII, VIII, IX. Error. determine not. So here are Three more of your Miſtakes.

4. You make all other reſerves of our own, to be allowed neither by God or good men. Here are two more miſtakes. 1. God maketh it our great duty to hold Communion with moſt, X. XI. Error. or almoſt all Churches on Earth with ſuch reſerves; that is, to own them in all that is good, and diſown all their evil, tho their Laws command the owning of them; without this reſerve I would not joyn with yours, or any Church on Earth, that is, If my Communion were an owning of all their faultineſs.

2. And it's an immodest Error to say, That none *are* good men, that in this are not of your mind. Is there any spotless Church on Earth? or must we renounce the Communion with them all, or reserve exception against their faults and misperformances?

D. A. O.

4. He that joyns in the Worship of the Common-Prayer, doth by his practice make Profession, That it is the true Worship of God, accepted with him, approved of him, and wholly agreeable to his Mind and Will. To do it with other reserves, is hypocrisie, and worse than the thing it self without them. Happy is he that condemneth not himself in the thing which he alloweth, Rom. 14. 12.

§ 5. **T**His is your twelfth mistake, and one that hath dreadful consequences. 1. It contradicteth the expresse Profession of the XII. Error. Communicants, who openly tell the World, That they take not all in the Liturgy, to be [*wholly agreeable to Gods Mind and Will*]: And you are not to feign a Profession of men contrary to their open Protestation.

2. It is most direful to your own separating followers, who by this are supposed to profess all your Worship to be [*wholly agreeable to Gods Mind and Will*]. And so the honest well-meaning people are made guilty of all the Errors which you put into your Worship.

3. It is contrary to your own former Profession, That you could in charity communicate with Presbyterians, or Anabaptists, &c. And so you approved of all the Errors of their Worship.

4. It maketh it a down right Sin, to communicate with any Church on Earth: For all have their faults and errors, even in Worship: which you feign all that Communicate with them to justify, as [*wholly agreeable to Gods Will*]. And to justify Sin, and teach men so to do, and to father it on God, are sad Aggravations; such shall be called least in the Kingdom of God. By this rule you would have separated from every Church on Earth, that we have notice of for a thousand years, yea, and to this day; and is not that near separating from Christ? And when no man knoweth before you speak in prayer, what you will say, How shall any man that joyneth with you, know but he may be guilty of your Sin at the next Sentence.

5. It is a breach of the ninth Commandment, thus to charge all the Ancient Churches, and Reformers, and the Nonconformists, with hypocrisie, and worse than open sinning, who have all communicated on the contrary Supposition.

6. It is no friendly act to the Church, to lay down such a Principle of perpetual Separation, and condemning each others Communion, and so to make the Communion and Concord of the Churches impossible.

7. It is Self-condemnation to judg the present Bishops Church-Tyrants, for excommunicating good Christians according to the Canons, for protest dissent about their governing Offices, Liturgies, and Ceremonies; and for imposing *Assent and Consent to all things*, &c. and yet to go much further than they, by making it Sin against God, to Communicate where the Worship is not [*wholly agreeable to Gods Will*]. Prove that ever the Bishops went so far from Concord.

8. I only humbly ask, Whether this make not Christ, and all his Apostles Hypocrites, and worse than protest Sinners: Did Christ by his usual joyning in the Synagogue and Temple-Worship, and commanding men to go to the Priests, to hear the Scribes and Pharisees, &c. profess that he took their Worship to be *wholly agreeable to Gods Will*? Or did the Apostles so, while they long joyned in the Synagogues with the Jews?

D. O.

5. *There may be a false Worship of the true God, as well as a worship of a false god. Such was the Worship of Jehovah the Lord, by the Calf in the Wilderness; Exod. 33. 5, 6. Such was the Feast unto the Lord ordained by Jeroboam, in the eighth month, the fifteenth day of the month, which he had devised of his own heart, 1 Kings 12. 32.*
33.

6. **Y**our fifth Premise is unquestionable. But if you distinguish not of *false Worship*, you will make but *false Work* about it.

1. There is that, which is the corrupting of Gods own necessary Worship-Ordinances, in so gross a manner, either outwardly in the *Matter*, or inwardly in the *Mind*; as that God will not own or accept the Worship and Worshippers.

2. There is that which is false in Integrals, Accidents, or Degrees, by pardoned failings and infirmities. To be [*false*] is to be disagreeable to the rule; such in some measure, is every Prayer, Sermon or Sacrament, that ever you administered. He that

that faith he hath no Sin, is a lyar. All sinful Worship, is so far false worship, which the best of men are guilty of: If you put all the Errors that are in this Paper of yours, in a Sermon or Prayer, will not so many falshoods make it false worship?

D. O.

On these Suppositions, the Proposition laid down, is proved by the following Arguments.

1. Argument, Religious Worship not divinely instituted and appointed, is false Worship, not accepted with God; but the Liturgical-worship intended, is a Religious Worship, not divinely instituted and appointed, ergo, not accepted with God. The Proposition is confirmed by all the Divine Testimonies, wherein all such Worship is expressly condemned, see Deut. 4. 2. Chap. 12. 32. Prov. 30. 6. Jer. 7. 31. Isa. 29. 13, &c. That especially, where the Lord Christ restrains all Worship to his own command, Matth. 28. 20. It is answered to the minor Proposition, That the Liturgical-worship is of Christs appointment, as to the substantials of it, tho not as to its Accidentals; namely, Prayers and Praises; not unto its outward rites and form, which do not vitiate the whole.

§ 7. **T**O your first Argument, I answer.

I have shilly answered this to Mr. Ralphson, 1. As to the bare name, either you will call all acts done to signifie immediately the Souls honouring of God, by the name of Worship, or you will not; if not, then that which is no Worship, is no false Worship. If you will, then your Proposition is false; so that either your Ma-

XIII. Error. jor or Minor, is another Error. For I take it for granted, that by Gods instituting, you mean not a general command to man to institute it; such as, [let all be done to edification,] if you did, then your Minor is not true. Kneeling at Prayer rather than sitting, putting off the Hat, using white Linnen and Silver plate at the Sacrament, praising God by new Hymns, and in English Metre, and Tunes, and many such, are Worship in the secondary fence, and yet not imposed by any determining Divine Institution.

Your wrong Exposition of all the Texts of Scripture, here cited by you, is more than one mistake. Deut. 4. 2. and 12. 32.

XIV. Error. Prov. 30. 6. forbid adding to Gods Worship, which is broken by all that either say, that that is in Gods Word which is not there, (as you here do); or that devise any Woship-Ordinances coordinate, or of the same sort with his own, as if they were imperfect:

perfect: But there is not a word forbidding subordinate secondary Acts of Worship, such as Kneeling, putting off the Hat, using written Notes in Preaching; or Forms of Singing, Praying, Catechising, laying the Hand on the Book, or putting it under the Thigh, or lifting it up in Swearing, the formal words of Vows, Oaths, Covenants, Confessions, Professions, and many such. *Jer.* 7. 31. condemneth them that offered their Children in Fire to Idols, because God never commanded such Cruelty and Idolatry. It is not true, that therefore we may not Kneel, or put off the Hat, or Preach, Pray, or Sing in an humane Form of words, till God determine it by Command. It was forbidden things which *Isa.* 29. 13. and *Mat.* 14. are reprov'd, as being the Precepts of Men, or things feigned to be necessary Acts of Obedience to God, which were not so. But this you think your self doth not forbid your Form of Church-Covenant, nor your Books, Translation of Scripture, Hymns, written Sermons, because they are devised by Man; nor Childrens Forms of Prayer, for being commanded by Parents. *Matth.* 28. 20. It follows not, that because Christ bid the Apostles teach all, that he commanded therefore nothing else subordinate may be taught. He commanded not the additional Form of the Creed, but only the Form of Baptism in three Articles; nor the Hymns and spiritual Songs in Form mentioned by *Paul*, nor the Kiss of Peace, the Womens Vails, the Mens being uncovered, nor wearing long Hair, the selling all and laying it down at the Apostles Feet, &c.

D. O.

But it is replied, *There is nothing accidental in the Worship of God. Every thing that belongs to it, is part of it. Some things are of more Weight, Use and Importance, than others, Matth. 23. 27. but all things duly belonging to it, are parts of it, or of its subsistence; outward Circumstances are natural and occasional, no accidental parts of Worship.*

§. 8 **O**ur Answer you well recite, if you add, that (call it *substantial*, or what you will) the common Lords-day Worship according to the Liturgy, hath not many, if any words in it, whose signified *Matter* is not sound and true; and as to the *Manner*, Extemporate Prayer hath oft as great unaptness of words (which every Age changeth) disorder and defectiveness.

As to your Reply, it is the strangest that ever I read from so Learned a Man:

a Man, and is a great mistake : What is there in the world, that is a Subject, without any Accidentals? Gods Worship hath a multitude of Accidents; As the Hour, the Place, the Pulpit, the Tables, the Cups of Silver, the Linen and other Ornaments; the Books as Printed, the Metre, the Tunes, the Chapters and Verses, the words of Translation, the Building, the Gestures, Vestures, Treasures, &c.

You add another mistake, that [*every thing that belongs to it, is a part of it.*] Then all these forementioned are parts of it, for they

XVI. Error. all belong to it. What a strange thing make you of Gods Worship? Then your Time, Place, Notes, Words, Tunes, Gestures, Covenant-Form, Catechism-Forms, &c. are all parts of Gods Worship, for they belong to it: And then you must be separated from for adding them. But after this mistake, you say, [*Outward Circumstances are natural, and occasional, no accidental parts of worship.*] Answer. Just now all *Accidents* were parts (or else *Accidents* belong not to it) And now [*it hath no accidental parts*]. Certainly this is the truer; for I remember not that ever I heard of mere *Accidents* that were *Parts*. A mans Name, Relation, Trade, Cloathing, Age, House, &c. belong to him, and are Accidents, but no *parts* of him: no nor his *Hair*, if it be a mere Accident. But do none of these *duely* belong to him?

2. The word [*Worship*], as I said before, is Equivocal, as signifying only the *Things made necessary to the honouring of God directly by Divine Command*: or the *subordinate Acts, Modes, Circumstances, left to Humane Choice*. In the former sense, the Order, Words, and Forms in the Liturgy, and in all our usual Devotions, are Accidents, and not *Parts*. In the later sense, they are *Parts*: But whether this later sense of Worship be apt, is but a strife about a word.

But you say, they are *natural* and *occasional*. Answer. Dark words! I think the Translations, Metre, Tunes, Notes, your Words and Method, Table, Cups, Cloth, Temples, &c. are rather *Artificial* than *Natural*; Art and not Nature made them what they are. If you mean that Nature commandeth them, then God by the Law of Nature commandeth them: and what greater Authority can they have? But yet that is not so, Nature doth not determine us to this or that, but leave all to apt and prudent Choice. And so he doth as to the form or words of Prayer.

If by [*Occasional*] you mean such as must be mutably fitted to just Occasions; there is no doubt of it: And while the Occasion is constant so may the Accidents. But sure while they are such; yea, and relatively appropriated or separated to worship (as Buildings, Utensils, and Maintenance may be) they belong to that Worship which *they are, as parts of*.

D. O

2. *Prayers and Praises absolutely considered, are not an institution of Christ; they are a part of Natural Worship common unto all Mankind: His institution respects only the internal form of them, and the manner of their performance; but this is that which the Liturgy takes on it self, namely, to supply and determine the matter, to prescribe the manner, and to limit all the concerns of them to Modes and Forms of its own, which is to take the work of Christ out of his hand.*

§ 9. **Y**OUR Second Answer is no better: 1. If by *absolutely*, you mean not generally (but as *opposite* to conditional), it hath no sense here that I can find: But if it be [*in genere*] that you mean, as the Context intimateth, they are no part of Worship at all, natural or instituted: For there is praying, which is cursing, and striving against God and Goodness, and praying to Idols. But I suppose you mean [*de specie*], praying to the true God for good things needful. And so it is another Mistake, That this Prayer is not of Christ's institution, because it is a part of Natural Worship. All is of Christ's institution which is part of his commanding Law: The Law of Nature is now Christ's Law, who by Redemption is become Lord of Nature, and of all, *John* 17. 2, 3. *Mat.* 28. 18, 19. *Eph.* 1. 22, 23. *Rom.* 14. 9, 10. *John* 5. 22, &c. He most strictly commandeth Natural Duties. The Ten Commandments were of Natural Obligation, and yet instituted. XVII. Error. And as Love was called a New and Special Commandment, as required on new and special grounds and ends, so is Prayer thus far also new.

2. And it is another Mistake, That Christ's institution respecteth only the internal form, and the manner of performance: The internal form is inward desire offered mentally to God. And is XVIII. Error. not this Natural, if Prayer be? Sure the Form is the Thing. But the institution of Christ reacheth the Matter of Prayer, as well as the inward Form and outward Manner: That we pray for the things mentioned in the Lord's Prayer; for God's Glory, Kingdom Will to be obeyed, &c. for Pardon, the Spirit, Grace, Glory, &c. That the Gospel may have free course, &c.

It is another Mistake. That the manner of performance is sinful, which is not of Christ's institution. The Words, and Method, and Length, are the manner of performance. Can you shew XIX. Error. an Institution determinative of all the Words, Method and

Length of all our Prayers? Or of all our Psalms, Rhimes and Tunes, and all our Gestures and Utensils? &c. By these words I am induced to hope, that the common report, That you were against the ordinary use of the *Lord's Prayer* in words, is false: for here you seem to be more for it than you ought: For if all the outward Manner must be instituted by Christ, sure the *Lord's Prayer* will be, at least, the chief part.

You say, the Liturgy takes on it self to supply and determine Matter.

Ans. 1. Matter is more than Manner. But this is another Mistake: For the Liturgy supposeth that Scripture is the Rule, and Christ the Commander of all the Matter of Prayer which is of constant use and need (as the Articles of Religion, and the Ordination-Covenant shew): And you give no instance of the contrary. But as to mutable Matter, which vary as occasions by Providence do (as days of Humiliation and Thanksgiving, the 5th of November, and those things that are specially suited to some times and places), you determine of such your selves in all your Prayers.

XX. Error. It is another Mistake, That thus to limit the Concerns of Prayer to Modes and Forms, is to take Christ's work out of his hands. If so, then you must shew us where Christ himself undertook so to limit us to his Modes and Forms only: else it is not Christ's proper work: Is there a Liturgy of his making, more than we ever heard of? 2. And then do not all Ministers in every publick Prayer, take Christ's work out of his hands? Do they not limit the people in Matter, Mode, and Form of words? What heavy charges lay you on your selves? Do not the Composers of Hymns and Psalms, so limit them to Mode and Form? It's clear that they do.

D. O.

3. *Outward Rites and Modes of Worship, divinely instituted and determined, do become the necessary parts of Divine Worship. See the Instance, Levit. 1. 16. Therefore such as are humanely instituted, appointed and determined, are thereby made parts of Worship; namely, that which is false, for want of Divine Institution.*

§ 10. **Y**OUR Third Reply is no better than the rest; viz. That because Divine Institution makes Rites and Modes necessary, therefore Humane Institution maketh such parts of false

XXI. Error. Worship, for want of Divine Institution. I cannot imagine how so worthy a man could mistake so widely, but by studying only what to say for his Cause, and never thinking what may be

be replied. God's determination can make any indifferent thing a Duty. And doth it follow, that therefore he hath left nothing to man's determination? God's choice of *Jerusalem* for his Worship, of the Tabernacle-shape, of the Priests, &c. made these necessary: Is therefore man's determination of the fixed places for ordinary worship, of the form of the Temple, of ordained Ministers, false Worship? God made it a duty to sing the Psalm, *Deut. 32.* and other since: Is it therefore false worship now to make Hymns for publick use? Christ taught his Disciples a Form of Prayer: may you therefore not teach your Children or Scholars any? Christ chose a Text, *Luke 4.* and preached, and that on a Mountain, in a Ship, &c. Therefore we may chuse a Text, and Place, &c. God appointed anniversary Fasts and Feasts: Is it therefore false worship to keep the 5th of November, or the like? God determined of the Priests maintenance: Is it a sin now to determine of Ministers maintenance? If God should institute and command all the words of your Church-Covenants, Prayers, Sermons, they would become necessary: Are they therefore sinful if man determine them? If God had made all the articles of your Savoy Confession, or all the Laws of the Land, they would have been necessary: Are they now all unlawful, because Man made them?

That which God hath commanded, is no false Worship: But God hath commanded the Churches to determine undetermined Modes and Circumstances needful *in genere*; so as all may be done to Edification, decently and in order, and not causelessly to cross the Customs of the Churches of God, and to obey those that are over them in the Lord.

D. O.

4. Prayer and Praise are not the things prescribed and enjoined in and by the Liturgy: It is so far from it, that thereby all Prayers and Praises in Church-Assemblies, meerly as such, are prohibited; but it is its own forms, way and mode, with their determination and limitation alone, that are instituted, prescribed and enjoined by it: But these things have no Divine Institution, and therefore are so far false Worship.

§. 11. **H**ere are two more strange Mistakes: 1. Are there so many Prayers enjoined, and the people called on with a [*Let us Pray*], and yet is not Prayer enjoined? There is some secret meaning
H 2 in

in this : For doubtless, you would never else affirm it, and expect that all men renounce their Sences; you can mean nothing less than that their imposed Forms, when used as commanded, are no Prayers, which is another Error. If so, then all the Prayers of the Church of God for 1300. years at least, that we read of, were no Prayers: And then you desire no part in the Prayers of any Churches on Earth, at this day, save *New Englands*, or a few *Separatists*. What wonder then, if you be left without the Benefit of all those Prayers? Is this the Communion of Saints, in the *Catholic Church*?

2. And are there no *Praises* enjoined. Are none of their Psalms, Hymns, and Doxologies, the Praises of God, when used: You suppose that Christ will call them *None*, or else you durst not. And is such a Slander of Christ, and the Universal Church, no sin?

Your next Misreport is that [*by the Liturgy, all Prayers and Praises in Church Assemblies are prohibited.*] This is too Rash: Where
 XXIII. Error. is there a word forbidding them? This can have no Sense, but that either none are *Church-Assemblies* that have a Liturgy, or that nothing commanded in the Liturgy, is Prayer and Praise in a Church-Assembly: But if this be your meaning, it is both ways untrue. 1. Is there no Church on Earth out of *England*? Or do they forbid any out of *England*, to Pray and Praise God? 2. Do they forbid the *Dutch* and *French* in *England*, to Pray and Praise God? 3. Do they forbid all Prayer and Praises in the Pulpits, in the Parish-Churches? 4. Have you proved all the Parish-Churches in *England* to be No Churches? Where is your Proof, how much soberer were the old *Brownists*? 5. Have you proved, that Commanding Men to Pray in such words, is forbidding them to Pray? when you set a Psalm for Praise, is that to forbid all Praise? Is not *omnis modus entis modus*, and includeth the Thing?

D. O.

2. Argument. That which was in its first contrivance, and hath been in its continuance, an Invention and Engine to defeat, or render useless the Promise of Christ unto his Church, of sending the holy Spirit in all Ages to enable it unto the due discharge and performance of all Divine Worship in its Assemblies, is unlawful to be complied withall, nor can be admitted in Religious Worship; But such is the Liturgical Worship. That the Lord Christ did make such a Promise, that he doth make it good, that the very Being and Continuance of the Church (without which, it is but a dead Machine) doth depend thereon, I suppose will not be denied, it hath been undeniably proved.

§. 12. **T**o your Second Argument, I answer. 1. To the Minor. Do you mean that this was the *Intent* of the first Contrivers and Continuers? or only that it had this effect, contrary to their Intent?

The first seemeth your Sence, which is another misreport. For 1. You know not who the first Inventor was.

2. You know not all the Continuers. 3. And so high a Charge is to be taken for a Slander, till it be proved. 4. Are you sure that you lay not this Charge of Malignity on the Men of God, that made the *Jews* Psalms? and on Christ, that composed a Form of Praying and Baptizing? and on *Paul*, that commands Hymns, and imposed on *Timothy* a Form of Sound Words?

And if you meant it but of the *English* Liturgy, you could never prove that our Martyrs and Confessors that made it, had so malignant an End. But you speak it of *Liturgical Worship* in general, which obligeth you to prove almost all the Pastors for 120. years and more, to be such Malignants. And its easily disproved, whether you meant it of their *Intent*, or of the *Effect*, by assigning the true and better Intent and Effect. They did it not to render useless the Spirits help, but 1. To be useful where such Abilities were wanting: It was the antecedent disability of Men that occasioned Liturgick Forms. 2. And it was to be a help subordinate to the Spirits help, to those that have it but in part; as Spectacles to dark Sights, and Sermon Notes to weak Memories. 3. They are really a great help to many, and therefore not made only to hinder them. When siter and more sound and moving words are set before an unready-Speaker, they help his affection more than his own shorter and unmeeter words would do; And his mind being not taken up with the study of words, is the freer to attend its affections. You must not measure all Mens Volubility of Speech by your own. I can truly say, that Forms are oft a help to me: I find young and old Christians are more fit to use them than the middle aged: For the young cannot at first pray well. (at least before others) without them, till use hath taught them. And the old have discretion to fit their Affections to sound words oft repeated. But the middle-aged, that have a greater Heat, and a lesser Light, are much more taken with their own sudden Effusions and Expressions.

Do you think, that when *Calvin* formed the Liturgy for *Geneva* and *France*, he had so Malignant a Design, as to defeat the Spirits help? Or do our *English* Psalms and Tunes quench the Spirit? and are they used to keep Men from the Gift of making Hymns *Ex tempore*?

2. I answered your Minor first, because it is matter of Fact; but your Major also is untrue: For that which is imposed with an ill Intent, may be used to a good one: And that which hurteth some, may be a help to others. If the Parish Churches were all built to serve Popery and the Mass, and

and dedicated to Saints, yet we may use them lawfully to better Purposes. If Priests Marriages be forbidden for ill Ends, it may be forbore for good Ends. If Glebe and Tythes were here given first to maintain the Mass, they may be used to maintain sound Teachers. It was Popes that revert the old Custom of not adoring, kneeling on any Lords day: And yet you may lawfully kneel then in Prayer: Yea, tho they brought in kneeling to the Host by that Alteration. So that this is another Error. And your Confirmations are not true.

D. O.

Hereon the Church lived and acted for several Ages, performing all Divine Worship in their Assemblies, by vertue of the Gifts and Graces of the holy Spirit, and no otherwise.

When these things were neglected, when the way of attaining, and the exercise of them appeared too difficult to Men of carnal minds, this way of Worship by a Prescribed Liturgy, was insensibly brought in, to render the Promise of Christ, and the Work of the holy Ghost in the Administration of Gifts, useless. And herein two things do follow.

§. 13. **I**T is a great Error to think, that the Gifts and Graces of the holy Spirit may not be exercised, if we use the same words, or if they be prescribed. The chief help of Gods Spirit, lieth in giving us a due esteem of the things prayed for, and a holy Desire after them, and a lively Faith and Hope that we shall obtain them, and a fixed Resolution to use all other means for them, and avoid all that would deprive us of them. And doubtless, he that hath these mental Dispositions, hath thereby a great help for his Expression of them; for out of the abundance of the Heart, the Mouth speaketh. But 1. It's well known, that Use and Knowledge, can enable an Hypocrite to pray as long, and in as good Words and earnest Tone, as a sincere Christian.

2. That which is easiest, needeth the least help: It is to me so much easier to speak my own thoughts in Prayer *ex tempore*, than to remember a form of words; that never since I was twenty years old, did I ever learn and say without Book, the words of one Prayer, or one Sermon, since I Preacht; to have learnt a Prayer or Sermon without Book, would have cost me ten times and more, both time and labour, and fear of being out, than I ever used or could afford.

3. Pardon me for asking, Whether if this Author put all the Errors of this his writing into a Prayer or Sermon, he did not need more help

help of the Spirit, to have avoided them, and to have spoken nothing but truth, than to have fluently uttered so many mistakes? He hath heard those called *Arminians* on one side, and *Antinomians* on the other, oft fluently express their Opinions in Gods Worship: The former he took to be heinous Errors: Had not all these had more of the help of Gods Spirit, if they had uttered nothing but true and good in a form, than they had to speak so much Error and Evil to God or Man, with extemporate fluency.

4. May not a man use the Lords Prayer by the Spirits help? If I have any help of Gods Spirit, it is more in the use of that Prayer, than at any other time.

5. May not one sing Psalms by the help of the Spirit, unless he make them *extempore*? I doubt you lay too much on words; Gods Spirit worketh on the heart, and its greatest help is in its greatest gifts, which are Faith, Repentance, Love, Desire, &c. and not words: Words must be used and weighed; but the main work is heart work, and God knoweth the meaning of the Spirit, when we have but groans, which we cannot express, and cry but *Abba, Father*.

But you come to History, and add another misreport in the words, [*and no otherwise*] that the Church for several ages Worshipped [*no otherwise*] than by such gifts as you describe, which exclude Liturgick forms. It's plain in the descriptions of *Justin* and *Tertullian*, that they did use extemporate Prayer then; but not that they did *no otherwise*. 1. *Tertullian* himself giveth you their form of a Creed, and so do many others. 2. They used a set form of words in Baptizing. 3. And they constantly used singing Psalms and Hymns, which were not made *ex tempore*, nor by every singer. 4. They used the Lords prayer in form often. 5. At the Lords Supper they had divers words of form and responses. In *Cyprian*, some parcels are to be seen, and in divers others. 6. The truth is, our History of the Churches manner of Worship for the first two hundred years, is so little, that we know but little how they did it, beside the foresaid two passages in *Justin* and *Tertullian*. But by what is in the Historians of the next Ages, and by the Churches general use of the Liturgies, without contradiction soon after, and what *Daillee* hath gathered, *de cultu Latinorum*, &c. we know that [*no otherwise*,] is not true.

2. It's too true, that the carelessness, sloth and worldly alienations of Ministers, made all useful sufficiency for the work of the Ministry, in Praying and Preaching, to be neglected, and doth to this day. But I hope no wise man dreameth that all the Pastors had one soul, or one mind and design. If any Malignants used or enjoyed forms, to make
Christ,

Christs promise, and the Spirits help useless; others used them, and promoted the use of them, for the performance of Christs promise, and the Spirits help. 1. Because there were not (when publick countenance increased the Churches) half enough men for the Ministry, that had the *extemporate gifts* of Prayer and Preaching. 2. And you confess that each Church had then many Elders for oversight, besides those that laboured in the Word and Doctrine. Do you believe that all these had such *extemporate gifts* of utterance? Or that these might not on occasion Pray and Preach. 3. If Parents teach Children necessarily to Pray in a prescribed form of words, without designing to defeat Christ or his Spirit, but to subserve them; how can you tell, but the first prescribers of publick forms did mean as well, when they found few persons able to do so well without, and abundance of Hereticks ready to corrupt Gods Worship with their Errors? 4. Let it be soberly considered, Whether mens long and hard Study for all the words which they write in Books, and for their Sermons, be done to defeat Christ and his Spirit, or to subserve them? And why the use of words studied by others, and weighed by us, before we utter them, should defeat the Spirit any more, than words premeditated by our selves? Or at least, is not the Spirit as much defeated in the People that joyn, who ever prepareth the words? For they do not themselves put them up by their gift of utterance. And its impossible when you speak, for the people to know whether those words were before studied, and whether by your self or by another, from whom you borrowed them. I have heard Mr. *Pb. Nye*, wish that some men were sent into *Wales*, and other such places, with an injunction to read good Sermon Books to the people, such as *Dr. Prestons, Sibbs, &c.* was this spoken to defeat the Spirit, or to serve him?

D. O.

1. *A total neglect of all gifts of the Holy Ghost, in the Administration of Church-worship and Ordinances.*

§ 14. **T**He first Consequence is an untruth: No doubt
 XXVII. Error. but Liturgies were abused to cherish Ignorance and Negligence. But that the neglect was total, is not true; whether you respect all the Churches, or all the parts of Worship and Ordinances. 1. The many holy and excellent Men, whose fame and writings are transmitted to us, did not totally neglect all gifts of the Holy Ghost. Were all the great Volumes of Sermons preached

and written by *Chrysostom*, without any gift of the Holy Ghost? Or was Preaching no Ordinance? Were all *Augustine's* elaborate Volumes done without him? Or all *Cyprian's*, *Macarius*, *Ephrem Syrus*, *Basil's*, *Gregory's*, yea, or *Bernard's* Homilies and Works?

2. Are the gifts of Holy Desire, Faith, Hope, Repentance, no gifts of the Holy Ghost? Or can you prove that these were all totally neglected in the administration of Church-worship?

3. It's known, that in the Exercise of Discipline, which is a Church-Ordinance, and in Catechizing and Preaching, they were not tied only to a form of words; no, nor in all Confession, Prayer and Thanksgiving.

4. It's a great blow to the Universal Church, to say, That it totally neglected all the gifts of the Holy Ghost.

D. O.

2. When a Plea for the Work of the Holy Ghost began to be revived, it produced all the enmity, hatred and contempt of, and against the Spirit of God himself, and his whole Work in the Church, which the World is now filled withal.

§ 15. **T**hat word [*his whole work in the Church*], is another mis-report. It is not [*his whole work*] XXVIII. Error. that is so contemned. A man may preach for Mercy to the Poor, for Obedience to Authority, for Love, &c. and he may sing Psalms of Praise, and pray for Pardon, and for Kings and Magistrates, and for daily Bread, and may profess to believe the Creed, and Scripture, &c. without the contempt which you describe. But no doubt but Malignity will take advantage of Liturgies, and of almost any thing, and so hath still done: All is not unlawful which bad men abuse: What is more turned against Christ in the world abroad, than his Two great Ordinances of Magistracy and Ministry: What more abused to strife, than the Sacrament of Love, Union and Communion? Are all these therefore unlawful?

And it's a palpable Mistake, That the foresaid scorn of all done by the Spirit [*ariseb from hence alone*], a justification of the devised way of Worship. It ariseth more from a malignant enmity to serious godliness, and from worldly interests and designs, and from the slanders of Seducers that accuse good men, and too much from the miscarriages of many that have boasted most of the Spirit, as Quakers, Ranters, Familists, &c. do.

And Experience confuteth you: For all those Countries that make but little use of Liturgies, have yet malignant parties that hate and oppose spiritual serious Exercises of Religion.

D. O.

All the Repreaches that are daily cast upon the Spirit of Prayer; all the contempt and scorn which all Duties of religious Worship performed by his aid and assistance, are entertained withal, arise from hence alone, namely, a justification of this devised way of Worship, as the only true way and means thereof.

Take this away, and the wrath and anger of men against the Spirit of God and his work, in the Worship of the Church, will be abated; yea, the necessity of them will be evident.

This we cannot comply with, lest we approve the original design of it, and partake in the sins which proceed from it.

§ 16. **B**Ecause you lay the main stress of your Cause on History and Experience, you constrain me to add some more History, which I had rather have past by: But if I set not Experience against Experience, I shall leave abundance unto the danger of error, who can judge by little else than Experience, and that see and feel what's present, and forget what is long past and gone.

The Truth I have opened in my *Christian Directory*, that both ways are liable to great abuse, and all humane actions have their inconveniences. The benefits of a sound Liturgy, are, 1. To keep out Heresie and ill words from publick worship. 2. To be a help to men of unready utterance. 3. That the people may know before-hand what they joyn in.

The inconveniences are, 1. The dulling of Affection in hearing still the same words. 2. The tempting of slothful worldly Candidates and Ministers to learn no other way of praying, when this will serve all their worldly turns. But I must add, That this followeth not the imposing of a Liturgy, but the exclusion of other Prayer, and taking up with this alone.

2. The conveniences of praying from an habit, are, 1. A just variation, as Occasions vary. 2. Help to fresh Affection. 3. Forcing Ministers to get ability for utterance.

The inconveniences are, 1. That the people know not till the words are past, whether they may own them, and so hardly try all, and follow with just consent. 2. That abundance of young, raw, un-

skillful

skilful men, do ordinarily disgrace Prayer by their unskilful methods and expressions. 3. That Hereticks and erroneous men have great opportunity to put their sins into their prayer, which yet the people should by joyning in, make their own, were they sound (which they are not bound to do by Sermons): And no man of understanding can chuse but suspect, that weak ignorant Ministers will be shewing their weakness in the highest Duties; and so must suspend their consent till late. 4. That less care will be taken in speaking to God, than in speaking to Men, while most sober Ministers study their Sermons. 5. That when to avoid disgraceful words, and manner of praying, men must decree, that no such weak or unready men shall be Ministers, the number that can do it better, will be so small, as that most Churches on Earth must be so deprived of Ministers, and all publick Worship, if that take place. 6. That by this means young ignorant men, that by use can speak fluently and fervently in prayer, shall be followed by the people; when many great Divines, judicious and holy, that have not that readiness of utterance, shall be rejected, as having not the Spirit. 7. That as all mens bodies and minds be not in the like quickness and fitness at all times, but sometimes clouded by Fumes or Weakness, the publick Worship shall be as mutable, uncertain and various as mens Tempers are.

All these on both sides are so great inconveniences, that tho both Formalists and Fanaticks have derided me for it, I have formerly said, and still say, That I believe that the best way to avoid both sorts of Evils is, To have meet set Forms, which shall be owned by the Church, as their professed desires, not being so long, as to take up too much time from freer Prayer, much less to forbid it; which *Calvin* wisely ordered for *France* and *Geneva*.

And now as you have Historically told us the ill Consequences of a Lurgy, I shall first tell you, It is a Mistake: None of these arise from a sound Lurgy, but from the using that alone, and not using also free Prayer with it: And next, I shall add some more of the History of Separation from Churches that have Liturgies, tho it be as displeasing to me, as it is necessary to the People.

I will pass by the Histories of *Munster* and *Munster*, and of *David George* in *Holland*, and of *Henry Nicols*, and the *Familists*, which were the Off-spring of Separation: And the sad Conflicts which they had against the sober Nonconformists; and their sad Divisions among themselves in *Holland*, and how many of them went further to *Anabaptistry*, and more; when *Brown* their Leader here, turned Conformist. It is only what I

have lived to see, that I briefly mention. When the Parliament began, 1640. there were few Separatists known comparatively in England: But when they were encouraged by hope of Success, they began to stir, and shew themselves, and two sorts fell in with them, and quickly increased them, that is, 1. The exasperated Sufferers. 2. Women, and weak young Men, who thought it a great honour in Religion, to go far enough from Persecutors, and formal or ungodly Ministers, not seeing the Danger on the other Extream. Holy and Learned *John Cal* foresaw the Danger, and wrote his Book, called, *The Trial of Separation*: and after, two more; one against *Canne*, and another against two *New England* Ministers. The Assembly being called, even sober and excellent Men that were for the old Conformity in case of Necessity, but not otherwise; Five of their number, differing from all the rest, save two more, wrote for *Independency*. This Controversie began the great Breach, while the Five Dissenters stood stily for a *Liberty*, that Men might gather *New Churches* out of the Churches of the other Ministers, of as many as should come to them in all places, and should have all Church-Power in those separated Churches. The other did not what might have been done skilfully to heal the Breach, tho they did much. The two Parties drew others into the Division. Those called *Presbyterians* were the more quiet, because they thought the Dissenters few. *Independency* might have been tolerated, but *Separation* was that which would not be endured, when nothing was imposed in Doctrine or Worship, which the Dissenters excepted against. The Separaters finding themselves few, were the more industrious, especially to get Interest in Parliament and Army. In the Parliament, they could never get near the Major Vote; but they had some, whose Policy and Industry made up what was wanting in Number: And by them, they got the Army new modell'd; all Parliament Men thence put out, and *Cromwell* put in Power, *Second* in Name, and *First* in Deed: He placed his Interest (as *Constantine* did, in owning the persecuted Christians, who had no other outward help but him) in declaring himself to be for *Liberty in Religion*, and the Protector of all godly Men that suffered for Conscience-sake, or feared it, whereby the Dissenters that feared lest the *Presbyterians* would Master them, came in to him, and he got enough to Head his Army (and great numbers also of Common Soldiers) who were for Separation; and being Men of other Parts and Interest, than those that Fight only for Pay, would not run away, but Conquered almost where ever they came. I lived in *Coventry* quietly, and with godly understanding Men, who thought all the Accusations against *Fairfax's* (or rather *Cromwell's*) Army, as turbulent, overturning Men, had been Slanders. After *Naseby* Fight, being near them, I went for Novelty to see them. There some sober Men among them

them told me, how they had discouraged all the Orthodox Ministers, save one or two, and were deserted by them, and turned Preachers themselves; they that had most Self Conceit, being the Speakers; and in a word, foretold me what Changes they would attempt, against King, Parliament, and Ministry, I went home, and told what I saw and heard, and being Invited by some of the soberest to the Army, I told an Assembly of Ministers my willingness to venture Life and Labour among them, to undeceive as many as I could. The Ministers consented to my going (Dr. *Grew*, and Mr. *Simon King*, yet living, were two of them); There *Cromwell* having notice of all before I came, gave me no opportunity to come near himself or the Chief in Power: But where I came, I did my best: For I found the Separatists half *Arminians*, and the other half contrary, *Antinomians*; agreeing to use their Power for the Changes that were after made. The *Scots* and *Presbyterians* they designedly and bitterly reproached. The Book called, *Martin Mar-Priest*, and other such, tell you their Dialect: Their usual Titles were, The *Priest Hyers*, the *Drivvines*, the *Sinners of Westminster*, the *Dissembly-men*, and such like. The godly able Ministers, were more scorned by them, than formerly I had heard among the Drunkards. What they did after this, *England* and *Scotland* felt. They cut off the King, they cast out Eleven Members from the Parliament: After that, they cast out and imprisoned the Major par, which was the House of Commons, and cast out all the House of Lords; then by these they made the People take an Engagement against the old Form of Government, To be true to the Commonwealth, as then Established, without a King and House of Lords: They ordered the Sequestering of all Ministers that would not Fast and Pray before, and give Thanks after, for their Victories in *Scotland*. They then pull'd down this Remnant of the Commons, and called themselves without the Peoples Choice, Two out of each County, and called them a Parliament. These put it to the Vote, Whether all the Parish-Ministers in *England*, should not be put down at once, and as credible Report went, it was carried against them but by three Voices. These gave up their Commissions to *Cromwell*. He now becomes the Defender of the Ministers: The Government is again Changed, and he made Protector, and Fundamental Laws made among themselves, by we know not whom; Parliament Lords made by him: Parliaments called, and broken at his pleasure. The Government of the Counties put into the Hands of Major Generals. After the Death of *Oliver*, his Son set up, and his Parliament first pull'd down (in which the Reverend Author, now opposed, told me, he was an Agent) and next himself. Then the Commons, called the *Rump*, were made Sovereign again. Then they were pull'd down again, and a Council of State out of the Army that did it, is set highest: Till at last,

last, by God's most remarkable hand, this conquering Army dissolved utterly without one drop of blood, and the King restored without opposition.

It's true, that serious godliness all this while much increased in most parts of the Land: But how? It was mainly by the excellent preaching and living of that Ministry whom these Separatists vilified, such as the Assembly-men had been, and by a middle sort of Peace-makers, who engaged in no Sect, but would fain have healed all: For the effects of the separating party were these: 1. The Land was cast into division and confusion by them. 2. Ranters and Quakers sprung from them. 3. Their overthrow of Government brought a Reproach on Religion. 4. Separated Churches of *Anabaptists* kept up a Religious War in many places. 5. All the Parish-Ministers in *Wales* were put down, and most of the Churches shut up, Itinerant Preachers being set up in their stead, lest the Parishes should be thought to be Churches. Perhaps you'll say, That these Itinerants were better than the old ignorant Ministers: But, 1. Their Number was so small, that there was commonly but one to Six or Eight Parishes: so that the People publickly worshipt God but once in Six or Eight weeks: And had not a Liturgy been better than nothing, or than to live like *Atheists*? 2. The most famous of the *Itinerants* were Mr. *W. Cradocke* and *Vavasor Powel*: I knew them both: The former was a most zealous man for practical godliness, with whom I conversed in my Youth, when in Mr. *Rich. Simond's* School in *Shrewsbury*, he was concealed from the Bishops pursuit, by the Name of Mr. *Williams*: But how gross an *Antinomian* he turned after he had learned Separation, before he was Itinerant there, his Printed Sermons tell us, where he so earnestly perswade:h men not to question their Justification after Conversion, for any sin whatsoever they shall commit; and more such like: And his Printed Writings shew, that Mr. *Erbury*, of whom he learned Separation, fell so far, as that it's hard to discern that he was at all a Christian. And *Vavasor Powel* was an *Antinomian*.

Now I crave a sober Answer to this, 1. Whether a Liturgy had not been better than no Worship for six days in seven? 2. Whether these Itinerants, that so dangerously erred in Doctrine, were not more sadly destitute of the help of the Spirit, than they that only wanted ability to utter sound words without a Form, or Books? And had not good forms been safer for that People, than the Doctrine of Mr. *Erbury*, Mr. *Cradock*, *Vavasor Powel*, *Morgan Lloyd* of *Wrexham*, (known also in Print). It grieved me to talk with one of these Itinerants in 1663, who came to me for Counsel: He had been an *Anabaptist* set up for an Itinerant over many Parishes; I examined him, and found that he had not any more learning than to read *English*, and was grossly Ignorant in Divinity:

vinity: He was ordained for all that by a Bishop and conformed; I wondered how he past their Examination: He told me that they askt him no questions about his Learning or Knowledge, but only whether he would Conform, and so ordained him.

I have now opened some of the fruits of Separation in England, as you have done the supposed fruits of the Liturgies, but indeed of the exclusion of free Prayers. And judg now whether all the ill effects have come from one extream. The truth is, having impartially observed the mischiefs of the Age in which I have lived, I have found that both the extreames have been the chief causes; and the Peacemakers both the most understanding, and the most innocent: And the nearer any of the several parties have come to them, the more innocent they have been. It is not meer Episcopacy or Liturgies, that have done the mischief; for such excellent men as *Cranmer, Ridley, Hooper, Far-
rar, Parker, Jewel, Grindal, Davenant, Usher, &c.* could use both profitably: It's not meer Presbytery; for such as *Calvin, Beza, Danaeus, Sadeel, River, Chamier, Daller, Blondel*, have been excellent Lights in the Church: It is not meer Independency; for *Ramus, Amesius, H. Jacob, J. Burroughs*, and many others of that mind, have been excellent peaceable men. It is not mere Anabaptistry, for there have been many peaceable worthy men against Infant Baptism, (and some Bishops thought it not of Divine Institution); and when they were re-baptized, continued in Love and Communion with others. But it is *Proud Ignorance*, and want of Christian Love, causing *Excommunicating, Persecuting, Separation or Schism* in some, and *withdrawing censorious Separation* in others, who (neither party) understand the truth, nor ever loved their Neighbours as themselves, nor learnt to do as they would be done by. The worldly *PR. IGs.* and the unruly *PR. IGs.* by *Persecution*, and by *causeless Separation and Alienation*, have done the hurt.

But I will tell the Bishops, that they should not be too angry with the Learned Author of these twelve Arguments: For I know not three men alive, whom they are more beholden to for their restitution, by opening the door, and sweeping the way, and melting down or pulverizing all that was like to have resisted them. I speak not of the *Intention*, but of the *Action*; by which the Separatists cut down the banks, and when they had let in the Prelacy and Liturgy which they dislike, then write and talk against them, ~~then these of y^e opinion to please for.~~

I will add one Question to this unpleasant Section; If there be as few in all the Christian World; yea, among the reformed *Calvinists* and *Lutherans*, out of our Kings Dominions, that can pray as well without a form, as with it, as we have great cause to believe; would he have

have all these Nations dissolve all their Churches, and like Atheists call off all publick Church-worship, till they have Ministers enough that have learnt to pray better without a Form or Liturgy than with it? If this be desired, I appeal to any that can difference Christianity from Heathenism, Whether Liturgies, or such a Separation from Liturgies, would do more hurt?

And I will add yet one question more, If there be not above two or three (or at last no) Church-assemblies in a County, which have Nonconforming Ministers, and opportunity to worship God as Churches; would you have all the rest of the Countries dissolve their Church-assemblies, or forbear all, and live like Unbelievers? If so, I am a Separatist from such destructive Principles and Separations.

D. O.

3. Argument. *That in religious Worship which derogates from the King's Office of Jesus Christ, so far as it doth so, is false Worship.*

Unto the Office of Christ, it inseparably belongs that he be the sole Lawgiver of the Church, in all the Worship of God. The rule of his Government herein is, Teach men to do and observe whatsoever I command.

But the Worship treated about, consists wholly in the Institutions, Commands, Prescriptions, Orders and Rules of Men; and on the Authority of men alone doth their Impositions on the practice of the Church depend. What is this, but to renounce the Kingly Office of Christ in the Church?

§ 17. **T**O the Major of your 3^d. Argument I answer, 1. There is that in Worship, [as the badness of the men, &c.] which is no part of the Worship, and therefore no false Worship. 2. True Worship materially may be so abused, as to derogate from the Kingly Office of Christ. 3. But it is granted, That all your own, or other men's Errors, or Sin in Worship, (which no man is totally free from) do in some degree practically derogate from the Kingly Office of Christ. (which should be better obeyed) and so is so far false Worship.

That it belongs to this Office of Christ to be the sole Lawgiver in all the Worship of God, is another mistake.

1. There is that in God's Worship, which is no part of his Worship. 2. There is a secondary Worship subservient to God's Institutions, which men may make Laws about. 3. There are temporary By-laws and Mandates, which have the essence of Law, (which is, to

signifie the Rulers Will, making the Subjects Duty) besides general Laws by Excellency, so called.

And so, 1. Princes may make Laws for the Use of the best Translation of Scripture, for the Version of Psalms, for Ministers due ordering Worship; to restrain some Seducers, for Time, Place, Utenfils, to be uncovered, and to kneel or stand at Prayer, &c. And the Pastor may by Mandate, oblige the People to much of the like.

Matth. 28. 20. By saying [*whatever I command you*] doth not say, Do nothing which your Parents, Prince or Pastor command you, besides my Commands. Sure it was his Spirit that said, *Heb. 13. Obey them that have the Rule over you.* Christ never particularly commanded any of the Twenty things, in which I instanced to Mr. *Raphson*. Must not Children obey Parents, or Servants their Masters, in learning any Form of Catechism, or chusing any Minister, or writing Sermons, &c. till Christ will particularly command them? This is a false Exposition.

It is another Mistake, that the *Worship treated about, consisteth wholly in the Command, &c. of men.* This Worship containeth, 1. In General, *Praying, Praising, Preaching.* Is this none of Gods Command? 2. It containeth for the *Matter signified*, the XXXI. Error. Confession of Sins of Omission and Commission, the Petitioning for all contained in the Lords Prayer, and for all Graces (the Prayers for *Faith* or its *increase*, was much forgotten, save on *St. Thomms* day, or such an odd occasion) and for the Church and others, as well as our selves, for Kings, and all in Authority; And Thanksgivings for all sorts of Men. I can find little in the Common Publick Worship, whose Matter is not of Divine Command; And can you find none such at all? wonderful difference of Eye-sight!

3. The Matter signifying, is much of it: The Psalms of *David*, the Old Testament and the New Read, the Lords Prayer, the Ten Commandments, Scripture Hymns, a Scripture-Benediction: Is none of all this commanded by God? What Christian should believe it?

It is also a Mistake, that [*on the Authority of Men alone, doth their Imposition on the Practice of the Church depend*]. For, 1. The foresaid parts are imposed by God himself. 2. The Lawful Modes imposed by Men, depend not on their *Authority alone*, XXXII. Error. but on Gods, who Authorizeth Rulers to do it: For he hath said, Let all be done to Edification, in Order; Obey them that have the Rule. They that obey a Pastor for Time, Place, Utenfils, Translations, Psalms, &c. or that obey the King, depend not herein on Man alone.

Your Conclusion also is a Mistake. This is not to XXXIII. Error. renounce the Kingly Office of Christ in the Church, no more than you did, when you wrote your *Savoy-Articles of Confession*, or

when you draw up the Form of a Church-Covenant for your Flock. All that is a Sin against Christs Kingly Office, is not a renouncing of it.

D. O.

4. Argument. *That which gives Testimony against the Faithfulness of Christ in his House, as a Son and Lord of it, above that of a Servant, is not to be complied withall; let all his Disciples judge.*

Unto this Faithfulness of Christ it doth belong to appoint and command all things whatever in the Church, that belongs to the Worship of God, as is evident from this Comparison with Moses herein, and his preference above him. Hebr. 3. 3, 4, 5 6. But that Institution and Prescription of all things in Religious Worship, of things never instituted nor prescribed by Christ in the Forms and Modes of them, ariseth from a supposition of a defect in the Wisdom, Care, and Faithfulness of Christ; Whence alone a necessity can arise of prescribing that in Divine Worship, that he hath not prescribed.

¶ 18. **T**O your Fourth Argument, I answer. 1. To the Major-Proposition (1. *To give Testimony*) Signifieth either by remote unseen Consequence, to cross Christs Faithfulness: And so do many of the mistakes of you, and every Party; Or it signifies a *known denial of Christs Faithfulness*. No Christian complieth with this.

2. *Complying* also is an ambiguous word; if it mean an approbation of any Sin, so no man must comply. If it mean communicating in good, where there is a faulty mixture of some evil, so he that will not comply, must joyn with no Church, and with no Man living.

2. To your Minor, I answer, (passing by the misforming) in your Supposition, It is not true, that it belongeth to Christ:

XXXIV. Error. *Faithfulness to appoint and command all things whatever in the Church, which belongs to the Worship of God: Else he were unfaithful in bidding them appoint many things belonging to his Worship. I have named instances enow; which I must not still repeat; You and all Ministers belong to his Worship, and yet Christ hath not in Scripture named you, but left the Choice of you to Man. So of all Accidents undetermined.*

It is another Error, 'That the Prescription of Forms
XXXV. Error. 'and Modes of things in Worship, not commanded by Christ, 'can arise from nothing but from Supposition of a defect 'in the Wisdom, care and faithfulness of Christ. I confute it, 1. You know not the hearts of all the World, and therefore cannot say, That this can arise from nothing else: Did you know *Ambrose*, that made the

Te Deum, and all that made and prescribed Psalms, Hymns and Prayers; and *Calvin* that made a Liturgy; and *Bucer*, and the *Martyrs* here, and all that prescribed Translations and Metres, &c. so well, as to know that all these, and almost all the Churches on Earth do suppose Christ to be unfaithful?

2. Is it only such a charge or Supposition against Christ, which made you your self prescribe your form of Church-Covenant, your *Savoy* Articles, your Catalogue of Fundamentals, your Lay-Elders, your time and place of Meeting, your Utensils and Ornaments at the Sacraments, &c?

3. I tell you another possible end, They did it, because they thought that these Modes are mutable according to Persons, Place, Time, Occasion, &c. And therefore, that it belonged not to Christs faithfulness to determine them, and that they should deny his faithfulness if they did deny that it hath left them to humane Determination under general Rules, and bid the people *obey them that have the rule over you*, &c.

D. O.

5. Argument, That which is a means humanely invented for the attaining of an end in Divine Worship, which Christ hath ordained a means for, unto the exclusion of that means so appointed by Christ, is false Worship, and not to be complied withal.

The end intended, is the Edification of the Church, in the Administration of all its holy Ordinances; this the Service-book is ordained and appointed by men for, or it hath no end or use at all; but the Lord Christ hath appointed other means for the attaining this end, as is expressly declared. He has given gifts unto men for the work of the Ministry, for the edifying of the Body, Ephes. 4. 7, 8, 11, 12. that is, in all Gospel Administrations. But this means ordained by Christ, namely, the exercise of spiritual gifts in Gospel Administrations, unto the Edification of the Church, is excluded; yea, expressly prohibited in the Prescription of this Liturgical Worship.

§. 19. **T**O the Major of your 5th. Argument, I answer, As to the former, No man is to comply by Approbation with any thing that excludeth any of Gods means; for instance; not with you that exclude the great duty of Catholick Communion. But we may so far comply with you and others, as to joyn with you in Gods Worship, tho you mix some evil. Mr. Faldo at *Barnet* was saine many years to Preach to a people that excluded singing Psalms. He did what they

would bear, when he could not do what he would. He complied not by Approbation with exclusion, for he spake against it.

Are you sure that all your ways have tended to the Edification of the Church? Every weak Minister that preacheth or prayeth, when an abler might be had, hindereth the Edification of the Church. Is it a Sin therefore to hear any but the ablest?

2. That which hindereth the Churches Edification by the Rulers fault, it may be the Peoples duty to obey for a greater good: For instance, It is less edifying to use our old singing Psalms, than a better Version: And yet for *Concord*, if the Ruler appoint them, the People must use them; because *Concord* with that imperfection, is better than to sing every one a several better Version, or divers at once: so a faulty Translation of Scripture, a weak Sermon, an inconvenient hour and place, when Concord is necessary, and cannot be had in the more edifying circumstances, it must be had in the best way we can. If the *Sheriff* appoint an unfit time and place to meet to chuse Parliament-men; it's a duty to comply, rather than not to meet at all; every evil so far excludeth good: And yet we must not renounce Communion in all good, where men mix any evil, lest we also give over all good ourselves.

3. Christ giveth gifts to men now in the due use of means, and not by miracle: Therefore he giveth them in great diversity, and by hard Study, and long Time, *Heb. 5. For the time they ought to have been teachers, &c.* Therefore a Novice must not be a Bishop; but an Elder, whence the Office had its name. All your pupils, people or Ministers, that had the Spirits gifts, had not your redundancy of Expression. And many can talk more fluently for falshood, than good men can for truth. I was never much troubled my self for want of words to express what I know; but I have ten thousand times more beg'd hard for more Knowledg, Faith, Love, and Hope, than ever I did for the gift of utterance; a full heart is earnest, fervent and ready.

It is another mistake, That the exercise of *Spirits* XXXV. *Error.* *all gifts is expressly forbidden*; unless you had meant that just at the use of the Liturgy, *extemporare utterance is forbidden*; but it is not so in the Pulpit.

And you should not confound things so different, as is the use of the Liturgy, and the forbidding of other prayers.

Nor yet the act of the *Commander*, and of the *People*. If Rulers should command Preaching, Prayer, &c. to exclude the singing Psalms, that is their Sin, and not the Peoples; who must not (like peevish Children at meat) refuse all, because they cannot have what they would.

D. O.

The pretence of mens liberty to use their Gifts in Prayer before Sermons, and in Preaching, is ridiculous; they are excluded in all the solemn Worship of the Church.

§ 20. **T**His answer is not only a mistake, but of an ill aspect on your selves. It's not *XXXVII. Error.* true, That the use of Gifts [*is excluded in all the solemn Worship of the Church*]. As if Prayer, Praise, Thanksgiving, Confession, Explication of the Scripture, Reproof, Exhortation, Comfort, Direction, Benediction, were no part of the solemn Worship of the Church. Indeed some Superconformists have said so, but I had hoped you would not.

2. I said, It's of an ill aspect. For 1. If Preaching and Pulpit-Prayer before and after, be none of the solemn Worship of the Churches, then all those Churches which seldom use any other, (saying a Psalm, which is a Liturgick form) have no solemn Worship at all. 2. But if it be otherwise, (as it is) then the Parish Churches so far excel most of you, that they have all that you have (Pulpit Prayer and Sermon, and sometimes a Chapter) and all the Common Prayer more. And is not that better than your nothing (except at Sacraments)? I know that the Nonconformists that I have conversed with, are in judgment for more, (for reading the Psalms, Chapters, Creed, Lords Prayer, Decalogue, &c.) But I have come into so few of their Churches that do any more than the common Pulpit work, (sing a Psalm, Pray and Preach there) that I have in that respect preferred the Churches that do all that, and add all the Liturgy besides, more than you use.

D. O.

Argument 6. *That which hath been, and is obstructive of the edification of the Church; if it be in Religious Worship, it is false Worship: For the end of all true publick Worship is edification. But such hath been, and is this Liturgical Worship: For,*

§ 21. **Y**our Sixth Argument is but a Former repeated. To the Major I grant it: All that is bad, is so far false.

To

To the *Minor*, 1. And such is all your Errors, and all the Disorder, in Reflections, slovenly Expressions which any weak Minister useth, and the faults that all men have in some degree.

D. O.

1. It puts an utter stop to the progress of Reformation in this Nation, fixing bounds unto it that it could never pass.
2. It hath kept multitudes in ignorance, &c.
3. It hath countenanced and encouraged many in reviling and reproaching the holy Spirit, and his Work.
4. It hath set up and warranted an ungifted Ministry.
5. It hath made great desolations in the Church: 1. In the silencing of pious Ministers. 2. In the ruin of Families innumerable. 3. In the destruction of souls.

It is not lawful to be participants in these things; yea, the glory of our profession lies in our testimony against them.

§ 22. **T**O your Reasons: 1. It's not the use of a Liturgy that hinders Reformation, but the abuse of it, and forbidding other ways of duty.

2. The same I say of keeping men in ignorance: Use all other means, and the Liturgy with it, and it will keep none in ignorance. Some *Helvetia* Ministers who endeavoured to have practised my *Reformed Pastor*, in personal conference, told me, That there the common people go customarily, almost every day in the week, to a Sermon, without Ceremonies or Liturgies (usually) with a Bible in their hands, and continue as ignorant as those here that have no preaching.

3. I think it was not the esteem of a Liturgy that made Quakers and Separatists here, revile and scorn the best Ministry, I think, in all the World.

4. Nor was it the Liturgy that set up and warranted such ill-gifted Teachers as Mr. Erbury, Dell, Den, Paul Hobson, Chillington, Lilburne, Prince, Wallwin, William Sedgwick, no, nor Mr. Salmarjb, who wrote for comfort, That Christ hath repented and believed for us; and we should no more question our Faith and Repentance, than we would question Christ. I pass by multitudes of Army-Preaching-Soldiers, such as those in Major Bethel's Troop, in the same Regiment that I was with; against whom, one day in *Amersham* Church, I was put to dispute from morning till near night, to save multitudes whom they drew every week to hear them, from their absurd Errors (and at last they turned Levellers, and Crom-

well was put to hunt them to death). The like I was put to with *Brown*, an Army-Chaplain, and an *Arrian*, that maintained, That Christ was not God, in a Church at *Worcester*: And this life I had with them long. Was all this caused by a Liturgy?

5. The desolations made in the Church, malignant men would make with or without a Liturgy. What may not be abused? The Authors must answer for it. Such as aforesaid, *Fewel*, *Grindal*, *Usher*, &c. *Prescon*, *Sibs*, *Bolton*, and a Thousand such, made no such havock.

It is not lawful to partake in persecution: but we must partake in much good, which bad men will abuse to persecution. An excellent foreign Church hath decreed to reject all Ministers that are not, 1. For the Antiquity of the Hebrew Points. 2. Against Universal Redemption. Our Learned Author here was for both these, tho men abused them to persecution.

D. O.

Argument 7. That practice whereby we condemn the suffering Saints of the present Age, rendering them false Witnesses of God, and the only blamable cause of their own sufferings, is not to be approved: But such is this practice: And where this is done on a pretence of liberty, without any plea of necessary duty on our part, it is utterly unlawful.

§ 23. **T**O your Seventh Argument: The Major meaneth, either Saints that suffer for well-doing, or for ill-doing. If the Anabaptists should be suffering-Saints, I would be none of those that they suffer by: But yet I would not be for Anabaptistry, for fear of condemning them as the cause of their own suffering: By that Rule I must own every error or sin that any Saint suffereth for.

2. The Truth bids me say more than I am willing, to confute this Error. I have heard Army-Officers say, That they believed abundance of the Ten Thousand *Scots*, killed at *Dunbar*, were godly men: And yet you were one that publicly, in Pulpit and Print, accused them, and did not justify their cause for being Saints. Do you think none of the Ministers in *England* were Saints, that refused the Engagement, and were sequestred for that, and not keeping Fasts and Thanksgivings for Blood? Are you sure that *Christopher Love* (beheaded), was no Saint? Or did you therefore own their Causes?

To your Minor: It is a gross Mistake to say, That going to the Liturgy maketh the Refusers [the only blamable cause of their own sufferings]. What! are

XXXVIII. Error.

you

you one that acquit all their Prosecutors, if it be but proved, that the Refusers are mistaken? Who could have suspected this? What if Presbyterians, Anabaptists, and such others err (as you believe they do)? If any would therefore silence, imprison, banish or hang them, dare you justify it, and say, That the Dissenters are the only blamable cause of their own sufferings? Sure you consider not what you wrote: You thought not so.

2. But are there no Saints that go to *Common-Prayer*? Why do not you distinguish Saints? I hope there are many times more Saints (and wiser), that separate not, than that do: And are not you as faulty for saying, *They sin*, as they for saying, *You sin*, if their cause be true? This soundeth as too much of a Sect.

3. The Truth is, Repentance is so hard a work, that I see both Extreams fly from it on a proud pretence of Constancy, and that they may not confess that they have erred. It was the grand Argument that bore down me and others, when we pleaded with some Bishops to have prevented our Divisions by some alterations [*Oh then it will be thought that we erred, and gave cause for old complaints*]: And now we must none of us hold Communion with the Parish-Churches, lest some Saints that separate, should be rendered *False Witnesses of God*, and blamable. But were not the old Nonconformists and Conformists, as *real Saints* as the old Separatists, and a Thousand for One? And do not you now make them all as *False Witnesses*? If really you have fathered any Love-killing, dividing Error on God, repent of it, and do not justify it, for fear of being thought blamable. This is it that keepeth *England* in confusion, and threatneth worse: Neither of the Extreams that have caused our calamities, are humbled, nor can endure a motion to repent; but Overturnen justify their former and their present love-destroying ways. The Lord give *England* Repentance unto Life: And the Lord help me to see all my Errors, and to repent the more, because I see that proud Nature is so much against it.

And you mistake, if you think that we plead only liberty for this Communion. It is duty that we plead: but not duty to all persons, nor all times, as if *the case of all were the same*.

We have not the happiness of Innocency: Repentance is next to it: When we confess our sins, we vindicate Christ and Religion, which are against them: When we justify them, we falsely honour our selves, and lay all on Christ, as if he would justify that which he abhorreth and died for. God will yet more shame us, if we will shame his Cause, instead of taking shame to our selves. Impenitence is more dangerous than any sin which we should repent of. Carnal Policy will be angry with me for mentioning the old faults which Adversaries sufficiently reproach us with.

(And

(And I must say, that God in his time, will justify the generality of the sober godly people of *England*, from the false Accusation of those Malignants and Papists, who charge them with all the Guilt of the Sins of a few Sectaries got into an Army, even the subversion of Church-Order, and Civil Power, when it could not be done, but by a Conquest and Oppression of these Religious People first, both Parliaments, Ministers and their Flocks; in comparison of whom, the Army-separatists were inconsiderable for number. They that would destroy thousands of faithful Subjects, as guilty of that which they opposed, till they were Conquered, and suffered for opposing, do but shew their own Iniquity) But yet God never taught men that way of Policy: Repentance, and not Impenitence, or Self-justification, is the way to take off mens reproach. God permits them to do it, because we do it not. To confess our own Sins, is no Extenuation of the wickedness of any Malignant Persecutors, or debauched men. What they truly upbraid us with in malice, let us openly lament in serious penitence; and not stand to a sinful dividing Principle and Cause, lest the *Saints be blamed*, that have fathered it on God. This Learned Author hath done otherwise himself, and so hath the Party now opposed. He and I knew the Man who was Pastor to the Commanders of the Army, when they pull'd down and set up, and again pull'd down, till they had turned their Armed Bulwark into Atoms; and when he saw what they had done; said, [*I wonder the people do not cast stones at us as we go along the streets*]. Was not this a blaming of his Flock? He knew how oft the Addresses of the Separatists to the several suddenly erected Sovereignties, did change their minds, and cry *peccavimus* by their new Addresses for the old: And why may we not blame them that blamed themselves for Fathering their Mistakes on God?

D. O.

Argument 8. *That Practice which is accompanied with unavoidable Scandal, engaged in only on pretence of Liberty, is contrary to the Gospel; but such is our joyning in the present Publick Worship.*

It were endless to reckon up all the Scandals which will ensue herein. That which respects our Enemies, must not be omitted. Will they not think, will they not say, That we have only Falsly and Hypocritically pretended Conscience for what we do, when we can on outward Considerations comply with that which is required of us? wo to the World because of such Offences: but wo to them also by whom they are given.

§. 24. **T**O the Major of your Eighth Argument, I answer, 1. It is not true, when there is far greater Scandal by forbearing that Practice; but only when there is less on the other side.

To the Minor I answer, It is not true, That it is only Liberty that is pleaded for the Communion in question. It is great XXXIX. Error. Duty that is pleaded: 1. The Duty of Christian Union, and Concord, and Love, and Peace. 2. The Duty of obeying the Commands and Example of Christ and his Apostles. 3. The Duty of avoiding the Principles of Schism, and the condemning and false accusing the Church of Christ on earth. 4. The Duty of bearing Witness against the Principle (of the sinfulness of Communicating with a Church in Liturgies) which would make Christ in most Ages to be no King, as having no Kingdom or Church on earth. 5. The Duty of taking warning by the mischiefs of Causeless Separation, in Ages that hath so much smarted by it. 6. The Duty of seeking our own Edification. 7. The Duty of keeping thousands of Christians from ceasing all Publick Worship, where they can have no other, but in the Parish-Churches. 8. The Duty of keeping thousands of good people from being ruined for mistakes and evil doing. 9. The Duty of obeying Magistrates in Lawful things. 10. And the Duty of avoiding Scandal on the other side: Is all this nothing but pretence of Liberty?

As to the Scandal mentioned by you, No doubt, Adversaries will reproach you, whether you Communicate in the Parish Churches or not. But note, 1. That if any be guilty of such sin, as for outward Considerations to do any Evil, or any Good which they take to be Evil, these men deserve some Reproach. But, 1. If they before were in Circumstances which made it no Duty, and after by Gods providence are in Circumstances which make it a Duty, the Reproachers do but shew their ignorance or malice, whether they be Persecutors or Separatists, that so reproach them. 2. Or if men see the Error of their former Separation, they must not forbear Repentance and Amendment, for fear of Reproach.

There is so great a difference of Men and Cases, that it's gross foolishness, to think that their Duties and Sins are the same in mutable Circumstances. It's a Sin to Preach or Pray, when we should be quenching a Fire, saving Mens Lives. Christians, as well as Pharisees, are yet to learn what that meaneth, *I will have mercy and not Sacrifice*, and therefore accuse the guiltless. Some men have no possibility of any other Church-Worship, but in the Parish-Churches. Some have no other, but what is worse. Some may have abler Teachers, but at the cost of Imprisonment and Ruine. It is not Lawful to lie in Prison merely for refusing to hear a weak Nonconformist, when you might hear an abler: And so it is

in the Case of Conformists; Else all were bound to a few men. Some have Liberry to hear fitter men, or at the least, more agreeable to them, without greater hurt than good (As the *Dutch* and *French* here have). Some are commanded by Husbands, Parents and Masters, to one Church, and some to another. Some have more able and godly Ministers in the Parish-Churches, and some have such as I would never own or encourage in the Ministry, by seeming to own them. Some can remove their Dwelling, and some cannot. Some had Liberty the last year, that cannot have it this year, without more hurt than their benefit will compensate. In these Cases where God hath not at all tied us to a Book, or no Book, to this Church or to that; he that can truly tell which way he shall do, and get most good or hurt, may by that better know his Duty, than by these Arguments, or Mens Censures.

But, verily, my chief Reason for Communion in publick, is the very same which you bring against it: Even the avoiding of hainous Scandal. I have told the World, 1. That Scandal is not *displeasing men*, but *laying before them a temptation to sin*. 2. That if the *Separatists* be the best Christians, they are farthest out of the danger of Scandal: It is the worst that are easiliest tempted to Sin, and so whom we should be most fearful to scandalize. 3. And it's a greater Sin to scandalize many, than few. 4. And worse by scandal to tempt men to the mortal Sins of persecuting or scorning godly men, than merely to tempt them to some small mistakes, or to grieve them. 5. And to scandalize our Rulers, is worse than to scandalize Inferiours (*Ceteris paribus*).

And now I tell you, I the rather joyn in Publick, 1. Lest I should harden thousands in the Opinion, That we take that to be unlawful which is not, and that we are for sinful Separation, and that we separate from, and unchurch almost all Christs Church, and that we are Enemies to Order, and Peace, and Concord, and that we are unruly enemies to Government, and giddy, ignorant, self-conceited people. 2. And so, lest we breed throughout the Land such a contempt of Conscience in Gods service, as they have of *Quakers*; and thousands by this should be alienated from the Reverence of serious Religion, and Youth should be educated to the like contempt, under these temptations. 3. And lest if any in Church-matters be guilty of sinful Extreame on the other side, (in Oaths, Professions, Ceremonies or Practices), we should harden them therein, by tempting them to think, that we have no worse against their way, than the Use of a Liturgy. 4. Lest the Conceit, that we are but a company of giddy Fanaticks, encourage any contentious Preachers to render us odious, and rail at us in the Pulpits, to their own shame, and the widening of our Breaches. 5. And lest the same Error should tempt any Bishops or Magistrates to think, they do God and their Church and

Countrey service; in silencing, imprisoning, reproaching and ruining Gods faithful Servants without cause, and bring the Land under Gods wrath by persecution. Are these no Scandals? or not greater than offending or displeasing the dissenting Separators? to say nothing of exposing our Reproach in all the Foreign Churches which have a Liturgy.

If against all this, the displeasing your mistaken Flocks should prevail, then their weakness and error would constitute them our chief Governors.

D. O.

Argument 9. *That Worship which is unsuited to the spiritual relish of the New Creature, which is inconsistent with the conduct of the Spirit of God in Prayer, is unlawful: For the Nature, Use and Benefit of Prayer is overthrown hereby in a great measure. Now let any one consider what are the Promises, Aids of the Holy Spirit, with respect to the Prayers of the Church, whether as to the Matter of them, or as unto Ability, for their performance, or as unto the Manner of it, and he shall find that they are all rejected and excluded by this Form of Worship, as is pretended, comprising the whole Matter, limiting the whole Manner, and giving all the Abili- ties of Prayer that are needful or required: This hath been proved at large.*

§ 25. **T**O your Ninth Argument, I answer, 1. O! confine not the *New Creature* to those of your Opinion. Do you think none of the Old Nonconformists or Conformists; none of the Reformed Churches, and no Church on Earth for a Thousand years, had any of the *New Creature*? When you have affrighted People with telling them, It is heinous sin, and returning to *Babylon*; and also by long dispute, made a Liturgy uncouth to them, do not ascribe all their averseness to the *New Creature*, which is from prejudice and dispute. For my part, when God taught me first to pray, I had no averseness to a Form: When I heard I charg'd with sin, I began to be averse to it: When I had studied the case, I was cured of that averseness: but never reconciled to the forbidding of all other Prayer, nor to the faults of any Forms.

And who knoweth not, that Man's culpable Nature loveth Novelty, and are hardly kept in lively Affections under any thing that is very often said? A Book, or Sermon, tho never so good, affecteth us not so much after many times reading and hearing, as at the first: We must not lay this weakness on the *New Creature*, tho it should teach Imposters to sell the Remedy to the Disease, and give children such food as is not too displeasing to their Appetites.

And

And yet I find not the generality of *Appetites* even in your Flocks, is against the Forms of *Psalms*, being not prejudiced against them.

It is not true, that *Liturgies* are inconsistent with the conduct of the Spirit in Prayer: It is a Mistake also, That this *XL. Error. Form of Worship* rejecteth and excludeth the matter of Prayer, whereas the Visible Book tells all the contrary. Do all those words express none of the Matter of Prayer? It is untrue, That it rejecteth and excludeth the Manner, as to the chief part: For the Lord's Prayer is a perfect Form for Matter, Order and Method: And the *Psalms* read and sung, are for Matter and Manner, neither evil nor excluded. And sure there is much of the rest laudable. If all Matter and Manner be rejected and excluded, then the Martyrs that used it, and all the Churches on Earth, almost, have no Church-Prayers. But again I tell, The use of Forms, and the forbidding all other Prayers, are Two different things, which you ill confound.

D. O.

Argument 10. That which overthroweth and dissolves our Church-Covenant, as unto the principal end of it, is as to us unlawful. This end is the professed joyned subjection of our souls and consciences unto the Authority of Christ, in the observation of whatsoever he commands, and nothing else, in the Worship of God.

But by this practice, this end of the Church-Covenant is destroyed, and thereby the Church-Covenant is self broken: For we do not observe that which Christ hath not commanded: And while some stand unto the Terms of the Covenant, which others relinquish, it will fill the Church with confusion and disorder.

§ 26. **T**O your Tenth Argument, I answer, 1. What your Church-Covenant is, I know not: But if it profess subjection to nothing in Worship but what Christ commandeth, it is *XL. Error.* your Church-Error: For then you are in Covenant not to obey the Pastor (even your self), if he set a Psalm, a Tune, a Translation of Scripture, nor if he appoint Time, Place and Utensils for Worship: For these are in the Worship. Then you are covenanted to disobey the Magistrate, if he command any of these, or command men not to put on their Hats, or sit at Prayer; or for concord, tie all the Land to one Translation of Scripture, or any such undetermined Mode.

2. It is a greater disgrace to your Churches than ever I knew of before, not only to covenant against God's Word, *Heb. 13. 7, 17. 1 Theſ. 5. 12, 13. &c.* and against the Fifth Commandment; but also to make this necessary to Concord, That your Churches must break, if the Members agree not all herein. This is a plain demand of Conformity to an Humane unfound imposition. No wonder if they are Dividers who set up by Church-Covenants, false Terms of Unity.

D. O.

Argument 11. *That which contains a virtual renunciation of our Church-state, and of the lawfulness of our Ministry, and Ordinances therein, is not to be admitted or allowed.*

But this also is done in the practice enquired into: For it is a professed conjunction with them in Church-Communion and Worship, by whom our Church-state and Ordinances are condemned as null: And this Judgment they make of what we do, affirming that we are gross Dissemblers, if after such a conjunction with them, we return any more unto our own Assemblies. In this condemnation we do outwardly and visibly join.

§ 27. **I**F your Church-state be essentiated by a Covenant, to be subject to nothing else in *Worship* (even the Accidents which God bids men determine by his general Rules of Edification, Order, Decency, Love, Peace, Church-Custom, &c.) then I commend the generality of Nonconforming Ministers, that they set up no such Church-state: And they do well to renounce all that you do ill to invent and impose, while you talk against Imposition, and adding to God's Word such Humane Forms.

But yet it's an Error to hold, That if any unjustly condemn other Churches, it is a renunciation of that condemned Church-state, to have Communion with them that condemn.

Who would have thought the Two separating Extreame had so agreed in their Principles? This is just the very Core of the evil of the Book of the contrary party which I here answer. Alas! how few Churches on Earth have not peevishly condemned one another; it may be for *Easter-day*, for the choice of a Bishop, as the *Donatists* (striving whose Bishop was the right): The case of the *Novatians*, *Audians*, *Luciferians*, and even of most in *East* and *West*, are sad Instances: And will such censoriousness unchurch them, and forbid us Communion with them? This is plain revenge, and to curse them that curse us, and abuse them that abuse us. I like *Calvin's* Spirit better than this, who said, *The Luther should call me a Devil,*

Devil, I would call him, the Excellent Servant of God. Too many Lutherans now renounce Communion with the Calvinists, who yet renounce not Communion with them.

D. O.

12. Argument, *That which deprives us of the principal Plea for the Justification of our Separation from the Church of England, in its present state, ought not justly to be received or admitted. But this is certainly done by a Supposition of the lawfulness of this Worship, and a practice suitable thereunto, as is known to all, who are exercised in this Cause.* Many other heads of Arguments might be added to the same purpose, if there were occasion.

§ 28. **T**O your 12th. Argument, I answer, 1. That which discovereth the unsoundness of any ones Plea for Separation, is to be received. There are several Cases, in which Separation from the Church of England is sinful. As 1. If any separate as the Papists do, because they are against sound Doctrine, or any good that is in the Church.

2. If any renounce Communion with all the Parish Churches under the name of the Church of England.

3. If any renounce Communion with the Church of England, as it is a Christian Kingdom, headed by one Christian Protestant King?

4. If they renounce Communion with the Church of England, as it is called one from the Association or Concord of its Pastors, or Church Governours.

5. If any renounce Communion with faulty Bishops, or Worship, or Discipline, simply and absolutely, and not only *secundum quid*, and so forsake the good that is in them for the sake of the evil. In a word,

1. All that Separate for a wrong cause. 2. Or further than they Separate from Christ, or than Christ would have them separate, do sin.

2. But they that renounce any corruption, as such, and the Church no further than *secundum quid*, as it is faulty, do well: For we must so renounce the faults of all Churches and Christians in the World, (and our own first.) But not the Churches and Christians for any tolerable faults, so we commit no Sin our selves, which they impose as the condition of their Communion.

Reader, I displease my own disposition as well as others, in the answering of these Arguments. But when I had read them, my Conscience would not suffer me to see many thousand good People so misguided, who have not skill themselves to discern the Fallacies, and by Silence to betray them.

Let it be noted, That it is not all, nor the greatest Objections I confess which I here deal with, having done it oft elsewhere; but these Twelve militate so much against all the Liturgies in the World, as well as ours, that I durst not pass them by in Silence.

1. Some object against the faults, which they supposed very great in divers By-offices, Baptizing, Confirmation, the Lords-Supper-Impositions, Burial Circumstances and Forms: But these are nothing to the common Worship of the Church on the Lords days.

2. Some object against the Ministers as Usurpers, being chosen by Patrons, and not consented to by the Flocks. But this is nothing against them that are consented to by Acceptance, tho not by Election.

3. Some Object the heinousness of the Sins of Ministers Conformity, as being deliberate Covenanting to ——— (I am loath to name them) and so the command, (*from such turn away, with such not to eat*): And the case of *Martiall* and *Basilides* in *Cyprian*, and that of *Miracle-working Martin*, (which on another occasion I have mentioned). But were these Sins never so surely proved, as great as alledged,

1. Every Minister cannot be proved guilty of the worst part. 2. And the Matter of a Sin may be heinous, and yet ignorance take off much of the guilt, as it did of *Paul's* Persecution: An unlawful War, in which thousands were murdered, and Countries ruined, is *Materially* one of the greatest Sins in the World; And yet wo to abundance of Princes and People, if Ignorance excuse it not; and if we must renounce Communion with all Countries and Persons, that are guilty of it. 3. And when whole Countries and Churches are in Sin, which we cannot cure, and have no government of, the case of commanded Communion much differs from that which is with single Offenders, and that is in our Power to chuse or refuse.

4. Some Object, that the 5th, 6th, 7th, and 8th, Canons, have excommunicated us already. Therefore we separate not, but they cast us out. *Ans.* Let them that are concerned in those Canons, defend them if they can, and justify themselves, for it's past my skill. But we are not bound (tho excommunicate) to execute them on our selves: Let others do it, if it must be done.

FINIS.

POSTSCRIPT.

R Eader, Upon the review of what I have here written, I think meet to repeat the Occasion, and to say somewhat of the *Matter* and the *Manner* of this Writing: The last sheet of my *Reasons for Communion* being Printed, and the opposite *Twelve Arguments* suddenly sent me, as being in many hands, and such as would frustrate all that I had written, if they were not answered: For the sake of such as have not skill to see Truth from Error, and are led by Prejudice and Names, I durst not in Conscience let them pass unanswered, they being of such dangerous tendency, and so exceeding erroneous and fallacious. But being put, by the stay of the Press, to do it suddenly, I see Reason to say more, lest I be misunderstood.

And *First*, of the *Cause* which I write of, in its self and its consequents: 2. The *Season* of it: 3. The *Manner*, as to the *Authors* whom I gainsay and confute; and the manner of confuting them: 4. My *Reasons* for the writing of this Confutation.

1. I am not writing against *Episcopacy*, *Presbytery*, *Independency* or *Rebaptizing*: I am so far from judging any part of them to be men rejected by Christ, or to be cast out of the Church, or denied leave to worship God in their own Way, or persecuted for it, that I would do any lawful thing for their just Liberty: Yea, so far, that it is only the contrary principle and endeavours by which they strive against, and condemn one another, and call aloud to their followers (such I mean that are for the opposed Separation) to avoid one another, as ever they would scape the guilt of Idolatry or wilful sin. And if I see one man in the streets beating all about him, I cannot keep peace without resisting his unpeaceableness.

I am not justifying all that is required to Conformity, nor all in the Liturgy: Let them do it, that can. Mr. Warner speaketh untruly when he talks of my change herein, and as if I went to the Parish-Churches for some worldly end. I have been at no Church since *August* was

Twelvemonth, nor am ever more like to be, unless the Church come to my bed-side or my door. Is Mr. Warner so lately born, that he never saw nor heard of our joynt endeavour when the King came in, 1660. to have prevented these Confusions, by getting a Reformation of the Liturgy? at least, before he said he knew not what, of one whom he knoweth not, he should have enquired, whether I have not, to this day, since then, 1660. held constant Communion with good Ministers in the Parish-Churches.

But with bad men, and well-meaning honest men, *Satan* doth most of his Work in the World by untruths and fallacies. Most that think they do God Service by speaking evil of me, falsely, believe and perswade one another, That I do write against them for not coming to the publick Churches; and that I am an Accuser and Plaintiff against them for this; and that hereby I animate men to afflict them, with many other such untruths.

Whereas I have written over, and over, and over, That I perswade no man either to or from a publick Church, till I know his Circumstances: And that I doubt not but it's one man's duty, and anothers sin. Were I under one intollerable for Ignorance, Heresie, or malignant Wickedness, who did more hurt than good, I would not seem to own him as a Minister, any more than *Cyprian* did *Martiall* and *Baslides*, or *Martin Ithacius*, *Idaeus*, and the like; or *Gildas* the Priests whom he describes, or the ancient Churches Heretical Bishops: Abundance of Circumstances make various the Cases of particular men.

Yea, tho those Dividers renounce Communion with one another (while I blame them, and lament it), I renounce Communion with none of the Parties, no, tho they revile and hate me: Only, 1. I will not commit any known sin with them while I communicate with them in all things else, and own them as true Christians, tho faulty. 2. And I will not prefer worse before better, if I know it, tho I renounce neither.

It's ordinary for Two Women fighting and scolding in the streets, to turn both their railing against him that would quiet them. And I expect the like.

The Cause that I write against, is this (Reader, understand it, or meddle not with what you understand not), 1. That *God's Worship* (saith D.O.) *hath no Accidentals: That all that is in it, and belonging to it, and the manner of it, is false Worship, if it have not a Divine Institution in particular: That all Liturgies, as such, are such false Worship* (and not the English only) *used to defeat Christ's Promise of Gifts, and God's Spirit.*

2. That

2. That this Worship is Idolatry (say some), or so false and unlawful, say the rest, That it is a denying of Christ's Fidelity, and it is a going to Idols Temples; or at least, unlawful to joyn in Communion with such as use it. And therefore they perswade all as they will avoid Idolatry, or false Worship and sin, to avoid Communion with such Churches.

3. And suppose that they truly instance in many things amiss, in Order, Ceremony, Forms, Impositions, Defects; because these are sinful, he sinneth who communicateth with the Church which useth them, his presence signifying his approbation, specially if commanded to that end.

4. And so *Renunciation of Communion being the Excommunication* which one Church hath power to inflict on another, the sum is, I write against the unjust Excommunicators of one another. Their Executions are divers, but their Principles and Spirits too like, tho few of them know, or will know what manner of Spirit they are of. The uppermost Schismatics, like the uppermost Millstone, are the *Active*, and the nethermost the *Passive* part, between both which Truth and Peace is broken, and the Church pulverized. Both Parties have not power to burn the Excommunicate, or lay them in Goals, or defame them without open controul: But the nethermost Party in this agrees, if not exceeds the other; That they renounce Communion with the whole Church on Earth for 1200, or 1300 years, and with almost all (Protestants as well as others) now: Whereas the Pope was taken to be intollerably arrogant when he excommunicated and interdicted, but rarely a whole Kingdom, or one King; but not all the Church on Earth.

2. That the Pope and his Prelates excommunicate the *Greeks*, and such as they call but Schismatics, and not Hereticks, with Exceptions, That they may yet possibly be saved Christians: But those that I confute, charging the whole Church on Earth, for 1200. years, with Idolatry, or false Worship, which God accepteth not, and none may communicate therein, do thereby call all men to come out from among them, and be separate, and to hate them with that hatred which is due to Idolaters, and to afford them no other love than is due to Idolaters, or men that we must renounce Communion with.

I write therefore but as a Defendant of Love, and Unity, and the Catholick Church, and the Communion of Saints, and the Souls of Thousands young ignorant persons, that being justly afraid of sin, and Idolatry and Damnation, are affrightned from Christian Love, and Unity, and Forbearance, into the Wilderness of sinful Divisions and Confusions, by these false frightful Names.

As I renounce all Canons that, *ipso facto*, excommunicate men for being against humane unnecessary Formalities, Offices, yea, and Corruptions: So do I for the same Reasons, renounce them that at one blow would cut off all Christ's Churches on Earth, or renounce Communion with them, if they have (but really or conceitedly) such Corruptions and Defects. Yea, I maintain (in the First Part), That such faulty separating from one another, is not a separation of them all from Christ, when they see not the Consequences of their own Errors; and man on Earth is in so great darkness, that we all swarm with multitudes of Errors.

Now Reader, if opposing all this, be not Peace-making, I know not what is: And if the Peace-makers be the Incendiaries for confusing the Excommunicators, and to be taken for the Enemies of Peace, for breaking Satan's factious Peace breaking Peace, Christ was mistaken that call-eth them blessed: And if the Zeal of the Sects which inclineth men to speak evil of such Peace makers, as Troublers of the Church, be the Wisdom from above, why did Christ call such the Children of God? O that men would often read over *Rom. 14.* and *15. 1 Cor. 12.* and *James 3.* with *Phil. 2.*

The plain Consequents of the Cause which I confute, are these (which I charge on the ill Cause, and not on the honest ignorant men that see them not).

1. That it is unlawful to communicate with almost any Church on Earth. 2. That Christ having no Church for 1200. years, was no Head of it, and so no Christ. 3. That men must covenant to disobey Rulers or Pastors, if they bid them kneel, be uncovered, or any of the oft-named Accidents and manner of Worship: And Children must disobey Parents that command them a Form of Prayer, Psalm or Catechism. 4. The *Scots Covenant*, and *Independent Covenant*, Catalogue of Fundamentals, &c. are made Idolatry. 5. The contrary Extream is encourag'd, To charge all this falsely on the Nonconformists, if we confute it not. 6. The Nonconformists, that 1660, 1661, attempted Concord by reforming the Liturgy, are made Idolaters, or their Communion unlawful, &c.

II. And whereas my Writing is judged unseasonable by some that own the Cause I write for; 1. It never will be so seasonable as to be liable to no inconveniencies or great abuse, nor hath been this Three and Twenty years.

2. It is when the Universal Non-Communion is maintained in Print by many, and more dangerously by an excellent man in Writing, and multitudes by these drawn into the sin.

3. And when thousands are possest with a false Opinion, that the Non-conformists commonly are of these Opinions, and are to be hated and destroyed; our silence seeming to them to own them.

4. And when by 20 years forbearing publick Communion, tho commanded and persecuted for it, our hearers are brought confidently to believe that we all this while took it for unlawful; and that if any now say otherwise, it is but cowardly backsliding.

5. It is when the Papists assaults of us, and of honest Conformists, as Trimmers, maketh it necessary to unite and encourage all honest men, That we fall not all into Roman snares, and not to bid all Christians forsake all such honest Parish-Ministers.

6. It is at a time, when thousands are in danger of being ruined for mistake, and thousands to be drawn from all Church-Worship, when they can have no other than in Parish Churches.

7. It is, when we are in danger of transmitting this dividing Error to posterity, by suffering for it, as for the cause of God.

8. It is when other Ministers do it not, and therefore some one must: And I that have no great impediment from friends, or outward temptations, but wait for my change, am fitter to bear the noise of Censures, than they that I hope may labour longer.

9. And if I do it, it must be now or never: For there is no work in the Grave and Darknes. But of all this, my *Reasons* say more

III. As to the *Manner* of my writings, I doubt not but all that ever I wrote, are faulty: I am imperfect, and can do nothing perfectly: I herein suspect this (and all) my self: and which is worst, I have not skill enough on the longest consideration to avoid the faultiness: For I have a strong love to *Truth*, and hatred of *Lying*, and specially a love to *historical Truth*, and hatred to the *deceiving of the World* and Posterity: And I have a *diseased Impatience*, (above any ordinary Tryal) to hear men rage and be confident in Error, and pour out words for untruths, with unconvincible Fallacy, and speak evil most zealously of that Truth, which they least understand.

And in this Impatience, I am apt to fit my Confections to the Cause, taking words to be false, that are not to be adapted to the Matter: But when I have done, the guilty, (yea and their favourers) cannot bear them, and the words fit not the hearer which fit the Matter, but the Disease is exasperated by the Medicine. But then I think what's needful to save those that are not yet infected, and to silence reproaching Enemies, tho the guilt be not cured.

As to this writing, it grieved me to write a Defence against Mr. *Ralphson* in Prison, and more when I heard that he was dead: But I knew no other

other means suitable against a printed Temptation, and Accusation, but a printed Antidote and Defence.

Mr. Warner hath since printed a further Accusation, with the same charge of Idolatry and false Worship, against all the *Manner* of Worship not instituted, and gives no Answer to my Confutation of it in Mr. *Ralphson*; and said so little, that I will not write for him, that cannot himself confute him.

The Twelve Arguments I understand, are likest to prevail most by the honour of Dr. *Owens* name, more than by any strength that is in them: I was willing, as long as I could, to believe that they were not his; they being as fallacious and frivolous as any of the rest, and one Error managed with above forty Mistakes. But when his own Friends that have more of his on the same Subject, (chiding me for Answering them) professed that they are his, I thought on *Pauls* case, *Gal. 2.* who openly opposed *Peter*, because he was to be blamed, lest his great Name should make the Separation the most prevalent, when *Barnabas* and others were carried away to Dissimulation, and seeming to approve it.

It grieved me, I think, as much as any that blame me for it, to seem to confute so worthy a man, when he is dead, and cannot answer for himself: But I durst not let the writing of a dead man be so dangerous a trap for Souls, and silently see the mischief prosper, for fear of displeasing the mistakers.

But let the Reader know, That it is so far from my design to wrong the Name of Dr. *Owen*, by this Defence; that I do openly declare, That except in this point of his Mistake, (and who mistaketh not in more than one?) I doubt not but he was a Man of rare Parts and Worth: And tho in the Tryals of the late Distractions of this Land, I mention some of his Confessions; it is to tell you that I had reason to hope that he repented for doing no more in his publick opportunities against the Spirit of Division, which dissolved us. And which of us need not repentance for our faults in those days of Tryal?

Yea, in his Doctrinal writings in his later Years, he is much clearer than heretofore: And even, that Book of Communion with the Trinity, (which he writeth against whom I here deal with in the beginning) is an excellent Treatise: And his great Volumes on the *Hebrews*, do all shew his great and eminent Parts: It was his strange Error, if he thought that freedom from 'a Liturgy, would have made most or many Ministers, like himself, as free, and fluent, and copious of Expression. In the late time he had never been so long Dean of *Christ-Church*, so oft Vicechancellor of *Oxford*; so highly esteemed in the Army, and with the Persons then in Power, if his extraordinary Parts had not been known.

But

But, Reader, if this excellent man had one mistake (against all Liturgies, and for Separation from them) when yet he was of late years of more complying mildness, and sweetness, and peaceableness, than ever before, or than many others; and if you will use his Name and Authority for this one Error, Let me tell you, I am confident you will wrong Dr. O. by ignorant defending him: I doubt not but his Soul is now with Christ; and that tho Heaven have no Sorrow, it hath great Repentance: and that Dr. O. is now more against the receiving of this his mistake, than I am: and by defending it, you far more displease him than me: There is there no Darkness, no Mistakes, no Separation of Christs Members from one another; no excommunicating or renouncing of Communion: They all repent that ever they did any thing against Christian Love and Unity, and received not one another as Christ receiveth us, and did not own Communion in all that was good, while they avoided the wilful consent to evil.

Were D. O. now to speak to you, I am fully confident, it would be to this purpose.

Too all believers must be holy, and avoid all known wilful Sin, they must not avoid one another, or their Communion in good, because of adherent faults or imperfections; for Christ, who is most holy, receiveth Persons and Worship that is faulty, (and false, if all faultiness be falseness) else none of us should be received. There is greatest goodness where there is greatest Love and Unity of Spirit maintained in the bond of Peace. O call not to God to deny you Mercy, by being unmerciful, nor to cast you all out, by casting off one another. O Separate not from all Christs Church on Earth, lest you separate from him, or displease him? God hath bid you pray, but not told you whether it shall be oft in the same Words, or in other; with a Book, or without a Book: Make not superstitiously a Religion, by pretending that God hath determined such Circumstances: O do not Preach and Write down Love, and Communion of Saints, in pretence that your little Modes and Ways are only good, and theirs Idolatrous or Intollerable; and do not slander and excommunicate all, or almost all Christs Body, and then wrong God by fathering this upon him. You pray [Thy will be done on Earth, as it is done in Heaven]. Why here is no Strife, Division, Disunion, Animosity, Sects or Factions, nor Separating from, or Excommunicating one another. Learn of Christ, and know what Spirit ye are of, and separate from none further than they separate from Christ; and receive all that he receiveth. While you blame canonical Dividers, and unjust Excommunicators, do not you renounce Communion with tenfold more than they. I was in this of too narrow mistaken Principles; and in the time of Temptation, I did not foresee to what Church-Confusion, and Dissolution, and Hatred, and Ruin, dividing Practices of some did tend; but the glorious Unity in heavenly perfection

perfection of Love to God, and one another; bids me beseech you to avoid all that is against it, and to make use of no mistakes of mine, to cherish any such offences, or to oppose the motions of Love, Unity, and Peace.

No doubt but now this is D. O's mind.

If any one think that my Answers to him, favour of too much disrespect, (which I fitted meerly to the Words I answered confessing my imprudence and liableness to such faultiness); I desire that none will approve my failings, blame me for them, but do not therefore justify true Schism, and blame the cause of Love and Catholick Communion.

As to the mention of former miscarriages, which arose from the Spirit and Principles of Division; the Drs. Argument led me to mention them so necessarily, that I must else have wronged the Cause and Truth Defended: And I had great reasons, I thought, both for that, and for this Defence, which I shall next enumerate.

IV. I am not so blind as not to see inconveniences that abusers will raise from all that I have said. But while I put those into one end of the Balance, I have so much to put into the other, as with my Conscience quite weigheth down. I know that men have already made tenfold worse use of our Silence in this Case; and the Opinion, 1. That we were all for the old Seditions and Convulsions, And 2. that we are now of the Dividers mind, than ever they did of our writing against them. And I have said so much against the *active violent Dividers*, that should I say nothing against the *Passive*, I should be partial, and seem a Sectary my self. Ovid taught me when I was a Child, That

*Omnia perversas possunt corrumpere mentes.
Stant tamen illa juss omnia tuta locis.*

1. *Truth, and Love, and Peace*, will be good, when men have said and done their worst against them: And I owe much more than this to their honour and defence. Buy the Truth, and sell it not, is an old Precept: These three are the very sum of all Religion, and must not be forsaken or betrayed.

2. The great success, and late prospering, on both sides of dividing Love-destroying Opinions (which I foretold in my *Moral Prognostication*) calleth loud for remedying-attempts: And when is the Medicine seasonable, but when the Disease is most dangerous and common? They that go to Sea, carry Medicines against the *Scurvy*, and *Flux*; and they that go where the *Plague* reingeth, carry Antidotes against it, &c.

3. The Ministerial calling layeth strong Obligations on us to fidelity; *sowing Pillows, and saying peace to sin, and daubing with untempered mortar,* are oft concluded with that Thunder-clap, *Their blood will I require at thy hands:* And I have been loath to desert the worst Malignants by despair, as *Dogs and Swine:* And shall I forsake the Children as such, because they cry, and are angry with the Mother because she hinders them from calling one another Bastards, or beating one another, or forsaking the house, because of one anothers Presence? or is She the make-bate, because they cry for being parted in their frays?

4. Thousands that hear the great Precepts of Love, and Pray to be forgiven as they forgive; are by such mistakes engaged in sinful despising, censuring, backbiting; yea, and rendering odious one another, and so live in ordinary sin.

5. Charity to such Souls is more necessary than to the Body; and how dwelleth the Love of God in him that neglecteth it?

6. He that doth not what he can to save others, yea, multitudes from sin, becometh a partaker in the guilt and danger.

7. He that openeth a Pit, must fill it; and he that seeth it covered with Leaves, and telleth not men of the danger, is guilty of the hurt.

8. I must not cease Preaching, because men will misconstrue it: Therefore not Preaching by the Press, when I have a call

9. I have long found, that multitudes of our conscionable hearers, are settled in belief, that their Teachers take Parish-Communion for Sin, because they practice it not, even when they are commanded, and threatned, and punished: By which they are silently misled, till necessity force us to tell them otherwise. And then they Censure them as unconscionable Temporizers, and so they do all godly men that communicate in publick.

10. I see how hard it is after, to undeceive all these.

11. Most of the Epistles of *Paul, James, and Jude, Peter, and John,* speak much and sharply against Church-dividers, and separatists.

12. The *Scots* Covenant swore all that took it, against Schism, and prophaneſs, and all that's against sound Doctrine and Godlineſs.

13. Christ told us, A Kingdom divided against it self cannot stand.

14. I saw that it is a dreadful dishonouring God and Religion, to satter on him our love-killing mistakes and sins: And that he will vindicate his honour on us, if we do it not our selves, by open and penitent confession of such faults.

15. We have long smarted under his Judgments already, and shew no publick Repentance, and are threatned with much more; which if God may judge, it's repentance that must prevent.

16. The common Convulsions, Silencing, and Calamities, which we have long felt, are notoriously the fruits of this same Spirit and Error, and both the parties which I here gainsay. And shall we lie four and twenty years in the Flames, and be afraid to cry [*Fire*] or call for Water, lest the Incendiaries on both sides be displeased?

17. God's dissolving their Power, and conquering Armies, without a drop of Blood, by their own Divisions, did so notoriously shew the Sin by the punishment, and shew Gods hand against it, as was a kind of Miracle of Providence, and maketh their Sin, that be not moved by it, too like to *Pharaoh's*.

18. The main thing that moveth me, is, That thousands being too young to know those days and deeds, blind and malicious Enemies, without any shame, charge all the Crimes and Confusions of a party of men in Arms, upon all the Religious People of the Land, that be not in all other things of the Slanderers opinions; and have made multitudes believe that it was all such that did the very thing which they opposed, and suffered for opposing: Yea, they would interpret some late Laws, as if they had such an accusing Sence. And shall we by silence, leave so many thousands under the guilt of such false Accusations, to their own sin, and to others wrong, lest we blame the guilty?

19. I find that this Error possesseth the minds of so many young Scholars, and some Ministers, as that they think of all Dissenters with so much scorn, as that it is the very thing which hath tempted them into the contrary extream.


20. I read and hear so many on this very Supposition, calling out *for our destruction, and not to bear with us, or spare us*; that our Rulers have great need of Gods Mercy to save them from the damning guilt of Persecution, to which such temptations would induce them, lest they take the Innocent for Guilty, and think that it's Service to God to ruin them.


21. I see that it is a most dangerous Scandal not to remove such a stumbling-block, which tempteth thousands to hate their Brethren, if not Piety it self; as if all the stir that we have made, were but against such things as *Communion in the Liturgy with Parish Churches*.


22. I see multitudes like, by mistakes, to *suffer as evil doers*, and be ruined for their Error; and by glorying in it, to disgrace the suffering of those that suffer for Truth and Duty.

23. I see many Servants and Children, tempted to disobey their Parents and Masters, that call them to publick Worship; and Families to be divided by this mistake.


24. I see how Atheism is at the door, if when all private Church-meetings are forcibly hindred, men be taught that all Church-Worship must be forsaken. And in how great a part of the Land already must they have such, or none?

25. I know that to drive all godly people from the Parish-Churches, and to cast out sound Religion thence, is the way to let in — you know whom: And that it greatly serveth the interest of the Papists, to have the Parish Churches vilified, and us divided; besides the discouraging many godly Conforming Ministers. 

26. I have said after and oft, That to separate from a Liturgy, as such, is virtually to separate from all Christs Church on Earth (that's known by History) for a thousand years and more. And at this day to separate from almost all, even the reform'd Churches: And to make Christ no King, if he had all that while no Kingdom: And to censure himself and his own practice. 

27. I have shewed the wrong that was done the old Nonconformists by this party, and their full Testimony against it. Yea, and that the old Separatists were for much that these now do condemn. 

28. I have observed, That the deepest Sufferers have been readiest to run into this exream, and therefore Passion to be suspected.

29. I see that the foreign Protestants are scandalized by a false conceit, that the Dissenters here are against Communion in the Liturgy. 

30. It greatly moveth me to see, That as Church-dividers by Oppression, do tear *East* and *West*, by making false terms of Communion by their Canons; so the Passive-dividers take a like way; that is, make false impossible Terms of Union and Communion; censuring all that communicate with other Churches on such Terms, as they mistakingly think sinful; making men guilty of the faults of Worship, by their presence. What is their Censure of us, and Anger, that we write our reasons, but as much as to say, we must all Unite on their Terms, or be judged Dividers, and Corrupters? So that they are at the old game, *Rom. 14. 1, 2.* one part despising, and the other judging.

31. By the reason, That we may not write our reasons against them; it follows, That Magisterially they must not be gainsaid, tho they mistake and mislead others (remedilessly).

32. The History of the Church sheweth, that the Separation opposed, is a cause that God never blest, but ended still in worse.

33. If the Principles that caused it, be not cured, a continual War against Love and Communion will be kept up from Age to Age.

34. Historical Truth is of great use to Posterity. And as God needeth not our Lie, his Cause feareth not Truth.

35. God himself recordeth the faults of his Servants; and hath made Repentance necessary to Pardon: It's Impenitence that is impatient of Evidences and Conviction.

36. The History of our Faults and Confusions is published over and over by Adversaries; and it's impossible to conceal it. The *Bookfellers* Shops, and their Talk and Sermons, abound with it. If a deaf man hear not this, must it not therefore be spoken? And when the generality of the innocent are falsely accused, it is the fittest season to confute the Accusers.

37. It cost me dear to attempt the preventing of such Confusions: Almost Two years Travel in that Army, in heat and cold, whither I went for no other end: It cost me the ruin of my Health, and after the wilful dissolution of all Power and Order, *cast me into those Groans and Tears which I can never on Earth forget. And must I not after all that, disown the things which I opposed at so dear a rate?

38. If men of Name and Piety write that which tendeth to cast honest Souls not only into scruples, but into a way of opposition to Unity, Love and Order, to their own and the Churches detriment and danger, it is Cruelty not to try to help them: And what way is there, if we must not not give our Reasons against the snare and error?

39. To say, That it will but enrage them, and make them worse, is to be uncharitably censorious, as if they were so partial, passionate and proud, as not to endure to be contradicted, nor to hear us give a Reason of our Judgment and Practice, and defend it against Error. I can bear it without alienation from them, in Respect and Love, if they say, That I am erroneous, or bad, or whatever they will censure me. If *they* cannot bear my true Confutation of Church-dissolving, and Love-destroying Principles and Errors, that proveth them not better than I in Judgment and Charity. If I yet please men, I am no longer the Servant of Christ. Carnal Policy in complying with sin, never was blest of God, tho for some Job it seemed to be needful. If a man going out of the World, may by silence betray the Truth, on pretence of despairing of success, even with godly men, and let *Peter* lead *Barnabas* into dissembling Separation, in reverence of *Peter's* Name, then *Paul* was too blame; and who then shall ever own Truth or Duty, or try to save the Church from danger, if he must not do it till the mistaken do consent? Or if a pretence, That the Disease is incurable, shall excuse us; and godly men must be taken for Dogs and Swine, that must not have God's Truth gi-

vide
pag. 8.
of his Re-
pentance

ven them, lest they tread it under foot, or turn again, and all to rend us?

40. Either this Doctrine of renouncing Communion with all Churches that use Forms of Liturgy, as Idolaters, or false Worshipers, and Adversaries to the Spirit, and the Office of Christ (and that Churches must covenant to obey none but Christ in any thing duly belonging to Worship, or any manner or accident of it): I say, Either this must be confuted, or not: If not, Christian Love and Communion are given up as hopeless, and Christ deposed by denying his Kingdom or Church: And why strive men about Ceremonies, when they have renounced the substance, and pull'd down the house, and threatned all that come not out of it. But if it must be confuted, 1. When, if not now? must it first take deeper Root, and deceive more? Both Extreame already are silencers of all that would undecieve them: And those that accuse one sort of silencers, are the other sort themselves, and cannot bear a Confutation.

2. And who shall do it? I confess I am liable to do this, and all amiss in Manner: But if others would do it, that wish it done, I would have forborn. The Truth is, Again I say, I am willing to save many the cost of it, who are not so fit as I to bear it. I have cast my Reputation over-board long ago, with both Extreame: I am not like ever again to be considerably serviceable to the Church: I am Independent, and neither have preferment to get or lose, nor any Church these Three and Twenty years, with whom I should be solicitous to keep any Reputation for their good. The Dust, or the Souls in Heaven, feel not the Reproaches of men on Earth. How could I lay down my Life for TRUTH, LOVE and UNITY; if at so cheap a rate I would sell it, or desert it, and go away sorrowful? But many others of my mind, I hope, may live to serve God longer; and their peace with mistaken froward persons, may be needful to their desirable success. I do therefore voluntarily take the Thorn into my Foot, and let God do with my Reputation what he please.

The Names of the Ministers who, as Commissioned, did consent to the use of the Liturgy when corrected, were, Dr. *Antib. Tuckney*, Dr. *Conant*, Dr. *Spurflow*, Dr. *Wallis*, Dr. *Manton*, Mr. *Calamy*, Mr. *Arthur Jackson*, Mr. *Cafe*, Mr. *S. Clerke*, Mr. *Matth. Newcomen*, Dr. *Horton*, Dr. *Jacombe*, Dr. *Bates*, Mr. *Cooper*, Mr. *Rawlinson*, Dr. *Lightfoot*, Dr. *Collins*, Dr. *Drake*, Mr. *Woodbridge*, and *Ri. Baxter* (named in the King's Commission): But Dr. *Lightfoot* and Dr. *Horton* came not to us; but they conformed after, as did also Dr. *Edw. Reynolds*, and Dr. *Worth*, who joyned with us, and were made Bishops, and one or two more were distant.

The Names of a greater Number of *London* Ministers, who gave the King thanks for his Declaration, may be seen in the Printed Thanksgiving: Of all that met, only Two refused to subscribe (Mr. *Jackson* and Mr. *Crofton*).

Crofton), lest the Subscription should seem an Approbation of so much of Prelacy as the Declaration stablished; and so be a breach of their Covenant: But they professed their gratitude without subscribing. Divers of them are yet living but most by far are dead.

Were it not lest the Papists take advantage by it, to undermine and ruin Peace-makers, under the Name of *Trimmers*, I would name you many places up and down in *England*, where all the people live in love and quietness, as if there were no Convulsive Cruelty or Schisms in the Land; and this through the wise and conscionable behaviour of the Ministers; the publick Ministers, with the ejected Nonconformists, living in so great and open amity, as uniteth all the people: Those that desire Reformation, won by the good preaching and living of the publick Minister, and by his kindness, go all to hear him; and when at other hours they meet to edifie one another by praying, singing Psalms, repeating a Sermon, or reading a good Book, he is far from hindring them.

Let any man that hath the Spirit of Christ judg, whether this be not a better state of the Church, than for some to be railing men from Communion, with the charge of Idolatry, and making the rest odious; and for others to prophane the Pulpits, by preaching up slanders, and scorns, and serving Satan in Christ's Name, by making Religion seem Hypocrisie, and conscionable men pass for odious Rebels for fearing lest some points of Conformity be sin; and stirring up Rulers to use them accordingly, if they were so bad and miserable as to be perswaded by such to persecution: Which of these, think you, is the better and more desirable case?

Obj. *But what would you do your self, if you were in Spain, or any other Land where there is no Church-worship but the Mass? Would you not forbear all? And will not the Papists use against you the same Arguments which you use against us, and say, That you separate from all the Church on Earth for 1000 years, and so from Christ?*

Ans. 1. What the Papists will say, maketh not all true which they say: The Question is, Whether they say it tru'y?

2. It's the trick of deceivers in dispute, to prove *ab obscuriore*, and carry the Controversie into a darker Room, and to fish in troubled Waters. What if it were an hard Controversie, whether I must separate from Papists, from *Bonner, Gardiner, &c.* doth it follow, that it is as hard, whether I must separate from *Bradford, Ridley, Hoper*, and all those Martyrs, and all the Protestant Churches? With whom then shall I communicate?

3. I'll tell you what I would say, and do to such Papists:
1. I will prove their Objection false. And 1. that at this day all Papists in the World are but (as Bishop *Bromball* estimates) about a fourth part of the Christian World. 2. And that it was not till the days

days of our King *John*, and their *Innocent* the 3^d, that a General Council decreed the Idolatry of Transubstantiation. 3. That a great part of their own never consented to this, and that few of the people understood or believed it. 4. That even this Canon was made against great numbers of Godly men, called *Albigenses* and *Waldenses*, who opposed them in this Idolatry.

4. Therefore I would resolve, I will have no Local Communion with any Church in the use of this; or any Idolatry, but will Worship God in private, if I can have no better; but if I can, I will. And I separate not by this, from the most of the Church, but from a Tyrannical corrupt Sect or Schism: Yea, as to them, I hold mental Communion with them in Christianity, and in all that is good and sound, and renounce Communion with them in all that I know to be evil.

Obj. *But what if a Protestant Church make any Sin a condition of their Communion, will you not separate?*

Ans. 1. I have said so much of this in this Book, against the *Resolver*, and *Unreasonable Defender*, as that I am ashamed that mens Objections make me guilty of so much repetition. 2. None such can make any Sin the Condition of my mental Communion: For if they joyn good and bad, and bid me do so, God forbids me, and requireth me to own the good, and disown the bad. If they use the bad themselves, and put not me to subscribe, or own it, I will joyn with them notwithstanding, in that which is good, and in due time and place, disown the evils, *e. g.* I have oft heard well-meaning men Preach falsehoods against *Calvanists*, and others against *Arminians*; some against *Presbytery*, some against *Independency*, some against *Infant-Baptism*; and alas! how ordinarily do men drop their Errors, and put them into their Prayers; I will not for this separate from a Church that professeth to take the Scripture for their rule. Let them answer for their own misdoings.

2. But if they bid me *Subscribe*, or *Approve* any one Falshood or Sin, I will deny it: If they forbid me Communion, I will continue it till they put me away by force. And then it is not I that separate from them, but it's they, by unjust casting me out, that are Schismatical; Ple still have mental Communion with them in Faith and Love, and not persuade any to separate from them as Idolaters, or make them worse than they are; but if I can, I will go to another Church (tho worse) that will receive me without imposing actual sin; but not draw others from them, who are not cast out for refusing sin, as I have been: And so I will not justifie many Protestant Writers, who say, That we separated not from the Church of *Rome*, but they cast us out for not sinning; yet I doubt not but this must be our case with sound Churches, that would impose any Sin upon us.

But

But still, To prefer the best and (all things considered) most profitable, before the more faulty or imperfect; without renouncing Communion with them, or perswading all others from it, as Idolatry, or unlawful, is that which I never called Schism, nor wrote against.

To the unknown Author of a LETTER lately sent me.

SIR,

YOUR Lettter contained, 1. Your friendly reprehensions of me, not only for my purpose to write against a MS. which you say was Dr. Owen's, but for many other things; and your enumeration of those faults of mine. 2. With a friendly motion, That I suspend my writing till we fairly debate the Cause, upon some larger Papers of the Doctor's on that Subject which you offered to send me.

I wrote you presently an Answer, but your Messenger never more called for it; by which I supposed that you changed your purpose: If yet you will send for it, I will send it you. The Breviate of it is this: 1. I do not feignedly, but from my heart, accept your manner of Reproof: It is honest and friendly; and I am truly thankful to you for it: Tho I am thought to be too plain and sharp, I can bear twice as much as I use. It's foolish pride that maketh us grudge at a friendly, tho sharp reprehension.

But your mis-information tells me the pitiful Case of most in the World: Your honest Reproofs are founded on abundance of untrue Conceits: There are about Twenty Untruths, through mistake, in matter of Fact, in your Letter: And how gross are many of them? As that I write not against Persecution, which I scarce ever write a book that hath not much against it: and this book it self doth fully confute you: And that I oppose not, but encourage divers things; which I know not the man that hath said half so much against: And you carry it all along, as if I were your Accuser for not going to the publick Churches, when I am a meer Defendent against your Accusations, and plead the Cause of the Universal Church, as not deserving an Excommunication; and of many poor

weak

weak women, and young people, that would be drawn to renounce all Church-Worship in England, for fear of Idolatry, or a Curse from God.

If you that have his offered MS's, and say, This which I answer is Dr. O's; were the man that made this MS. which I answer, so common, I think you did him a great deal of wrong: Too in his Printed Books, especially that of Prayer, and for Peace. &c. he owns the ill Principle which I now confute, against all publick Worship by Liturgy, and against man's power to command any more than Christ hath done in the order and manner of Worship and Church-Government (which also is to be seen in his Preface, &c. of his Original of Churches, and his Vindication of the Nonconformists, &c.) Yet these Printed Books of his (especially his Original of Churches, &c.) have so much sound and excellent matter, and so many healing peaceable passages in them, as did hide this one great Mistake: so that I long purposely forbore all contradiction of him in it (tho I plainly answered his Arguments in my Cure of Church-divisions), for fear lest I should occasion a more common offensive or hurtful notice of them. But when that one Error which was thus buried in abundance of sound matter, was by some of you, not only culled out, and made common in MS. by it self, but even in a writing, in which he goesb yet further towards Non-Communion with all the Churches almost on Earth, than ever he did in his Printed Books; and this to affright all others into the same Non-Communion; you could not sure imagine, that no Christian had so much love to the Church, to Souls, to Catholick Communion, to Love and Concord, as not to let such a Writing do its worst, without any Antidote and Answer. You could scarce have wrong'd the Doctor, or his Memory more: All his Enemies could not have done half so much against him, having no such matter to accuse him of, as you have unadvisedly given them. And if now also you will lay your own Fault on others that love the Truth, and Church, and Souls, and Peace, better than this Manuscript, or its Reputation, you will but run further into Error.

And can you possibly be ignorant how like you are to the other Extremes, 1. While you excommunicate far more than they do, even almost all the Body of Christ, as to External Communion: 2. And are for silencing us as well as they: Why else may not I have leave to render a Reason of my Judgment and Practice, to those that are offended at it? 3. And as they would deprive Congregations of sound Doctrine, Instruction and Worship, for the Cause of the Opinions of their Faction, would not you discharge almost whole Counties from all Church-worship, where Forms are used, and your way is not tolerated?

Had not the MS. been against all Forms of Liturgy, but only against the real or supposed faults of the English one; and had it been only against owning the faults, and not against Communion in necessary Duty, I had not troubled you, by my Defence.

II. I did much approve of your brotherly motion to debate the Case friendly, on the perusal of his larger Writings. And tho your Letter came to me a week after the Book was printed, the Bookseller said he had sold but two, and I purposed thankfully to accept your offer, and (tho to my cost) to have done my best to stop the rest, and recall those two: But not knowing you, nor how to send to you, I must suppose that you retract your Motions, your Messenger not calling for my answer, as we appointed.

Remember, I beseech you, that the Dr. writeth for mental Communion in Faith and Love, with all true Churches, tho he write against outward Local Communion with almost all: And I crave your perusal of the first and third parts of this Book, against the Resolver of three Cases, &c. And if you find that all the Cases, in which I vindicate Local Separation to be no Schism, be not enough, bethink you what the Scripture meaneth by reprehended Heresie, Schism, and Division; and whether there be any such Sins; and whether they that are so much for Scripture-sufficiency, as not to communicate with a Mode, Order or Form of Words, which it prescribeth not, should set so light by it, as not to fear its many sharp Condemnations of the fore-said sins, and its frequent and vehement Exhortations to Unity and Communion of Saints, and to receive one another, as Christ received us, to the Glory of God.

Lord pardon the faulty imperfections of our Services, which we must rather venture on, than a total Omission; and teach us to pardon one another.

April 7. 1684.

R Eader, I have not time to gather the Errata of the Press or Copy; only I intreat you to insert an omitted line, page 29. line 35. because the sence is altered by the omission: After [them] add [than those of the Opinion which he pleads for].

*Books Sold by Tho. Parkhurst, at the Bible and
Three Crowns in Cheapside, near Mercers-
Chappel.*

- I. **M**R. *Baxter's* Christian Directory, or Sum of Practical
Divinity, and Cases of Conscience.
- 2 ——— *Catholick Theology*, Plain, Pure, and Peaceable.
- 3 ——— *Which is the True Church*, in Three Parts.
- 4 ——— *Life of Faith* in Three Parts.
- 5 ——— *Answer to Mr. Dodwell and Dr. Sherlock*.
- 6 ——— *History of Councils Enlarged and Defended*.
- 7 ——— *Catechising of Families, A Teacher of Householders,*
how to Teach their Households; wherein the Creed, Ten Com-
mandments, Lords Prayer, and Sacraments, are Expounded.
- 8 ——— *Two Disputations of Original Sin*.
- Dr. Horton's* 100. Select Sermons.
- *Sermons on the 4th, 42d, 51st, 63d. Psalms.*
- Dr. Anthony Burges* Sermons on 2 Cor. 3. Chap.
- Dr. Donn's* Sermons, Vol. 3.
- A Discourse of Gods Providence*, by *Dr. John Collings*.
- Morning Exercise against Popery.*
- Sermons on the Epistle to the Colossians*, by *John Daille*,
Author of the Use of the Fathers.
- A Discourse of the Covenant of Redemption.*

Book Sold by Tho. Parkhurst, at the Bible and
Three Groves in Chesham, near Meppershall
Clippel

1. M. R. Parkhurst's Christian Directory, or Sum of Practical
Divinity, and Cases of Conscience.
2. ———— Catholic Theology, Plain, Pure, and Passable.
3. ———— Which is the True Church, in Three Parts.
4. ———— Life of Faith in Three Parts.
5. ———— Answer to Mr. Wadsworth and Dr. A. A. A.
6. ———— History of Councils Enlarged and Defended.
7. ———— Catechising of Families, A Teacher of Households,
how to Teach their Households; wherein the Creed, Ten Com-
mandments, Lord's Prayer, and Sacraments, are Expounded.
8. ———— Two Disputations of Original Sin.
- Dr. Hutton's 100. Select Sermons.
- Sermons on the 1st, 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th, 9th, 10th, 11th, 12th, 13th, 14th, 15th, 16th, 17th, 18th, 19th, 20th, 21st, 22nd, 23rd, 24th, 25th, 26th, 27th, 28th, 29th, 30th, 31st, 32nd, 33rd, 34th, 35th, 36th, 37th, 38th, 39th, 40th, 41st, 42nd, 43rd, 44th, 45th, 46th, 47th, 48th, 49th, 50th, 51st, 52nd, 53rd, 54th, 55th, 56th, 57th, 58th, 59th, 60th, 61st, 62nd, 63rd, 64th, 65th, 66th, 67th, 68th, 69th, 70th, 71st, 72nd, 73rd, 74th, 75th, 76th, 77th, 78th, 79th, 80th, 81st, 82nd, 83rd, 84th, 85th, 86th, 87th, 88th, 89th, 90th, 91st, 92nd, 93rd, 94th, 95th, 96th, 97th, 98th, 99th, 100th.
- Dr. Keble's Sermons on 2 Cor. 3. Chap. 3.
- Dr. Dorr's Sermons, Vol. 2.
- A Discourse of God's Providence, by Dr. J. A. A. A.
- Blowing Exertile against Popery.
- Sermons on the Epistle to the Colossians, by John Dorr.
- Author of the Life of the Fathers.
- A Discourse of the Government of Redemption.

Catholick Communion

D E F E N D E D:

In TWO PARTS:

I Reasons of the Authors censured Communion with the Parish-Churches.

II. The Reasons why Dr. J. O's. Twelve Arguments change not his Judgment.

By *RICHARD BAXTER*, a Lover of Love and Peace; and by defending them, displeasing those that labour to destroy them.

Rom. 15. 7. *Receive ye one another as Christ also received us, to the glory of God.*

Rom. 12. 18. *If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.*

Psal. 18. 26, 27. *With the froward thou wilt shew thy self froward (or wrestle): For thou wilt save the afflicted people, but wilt bring down high looks.*



L O N D O N:

Printed for Tho. Parkhurst, at the Bible and Three Crowns in Cheap-side,
near Mercers-Chappel. 1684.

1911

DEFEINCE

1911

1940-1941



TO THE READER.

IT'S known that Christ suffered between Two Malefactors, reputed by his Persecutors the greatest of the Three: One of them was penitent, and justified Christ, and reproved the other, who reproached, even dying, him that should have been taken for his only Hope. Ignatius compared the Teeth of the Lions, to the Millstones, which must grind him to be Bread for his Fathers use. The two Extreams have been at this unhappy Dividing-work, since the Christian Church began to prosper: Diotrephes, and the Jewish Imposers on the one side, and the Self-conceited separating Sects on the other, were used by Satan to fight against Saving Truth and Love. They were foretold by Paul, Acts 20. both that grievous Wolves should enter, and devour the Flocks; and that of their own selves should men arise, to speak perverse things, and draw away Disciples after them. But when Christian Power had lent one Party the Sword, or made it the Executioner of Clergy-wrath, the Church hath ever since between two Millstones, been ground to Meal. There hath indeed been much Differences in their dividing ways. The upper Millstone hath still been violently active: The nether Millstone thought it self innocent, because it was passive. Even before the Church-Tympanites, many score several Sects rose up, that had their several Societies, separating from the rest, on pretence of greater Orthodoxnes and Piety. No two of the Contraries could be in the Right; much less all: Therefore all, or all save one, did separate for Error. But as Luther saith (De Conciliis) these Divisions were but a Play (as at Foot-ball) in comparison of the Strages, or bloody destructive Divisions which were made by Patriarchs and Councils of advanced Prelates. If under Heathens, the Novations sprung up from a Strife, to have their Captain the great Bishop of Rome; and the Donanists from a Strife, to have their Captain the great Bishop of Carthage, and so many other Sects; What wonder, if the Strife of Patriarchs, Metropolitans and Councils, when they were like great Secular Princes, did cut all the Churches into those Shreds.

To the Reader.

or Schisms, which have continued it's Diseases and Reproach these 1200, if not 1300. years, to this day, unhealed, and unlikely to be healed; four of these Patriarchs condemning Rome, and the Roman Fifth condemning them: As it was said of Saul and David, The Under-sets and Schisms have killed their thousands, and the Uppermost Patriarchal, Conciliary, Tyrannical Schisms, their ten thousands.

Alas, to what a horrid degree of Pravity is Humane Nature fallen! What a scandalous Temptation give Men to the Bruitists, who prefer the Bruits, yea, the wildest before Men? When even the Learned sort, who think themselves so fit to guide all the rest, that none is worthy to Preach Christs Gospel, who dissent from their prescribed Opinions and Ceremonies, are yet unable after 1200. years experience of the Churches, to understand that the terms and ways which have hitherto distracted and torn them, and to this day made them the scorn of the Infidels, and like the Sberds of a broken Pot, are not the only ways and terms of Catholick Union and Communion; which, if any deny, he is unworthy to live in Christian Society. Lord! is there no hope, that the World, at least the Learned part, may be healed of this self-laceration and distraction. If there be no Love and Peace but in Heaven, and with the few that the World abhorreth, O cause us all that are fervent Lovers of Love and Peace, to be more weaned from this earthly Nest of Wasps, and to love and long for the World where Love and Peace are perfected.

I have seen Canons which have ipso facto excommunicated Men (how wise, how holy, how useful, and how many soever) that do but affirm any things in their Church-Offices, Liturgies, Words and Ceremonies, to be at all repugnant to the Word of God; and at once oblige Men to subscribe to an Article, That not only they, but General Councils are fallible. So that I stand amazed to think what Spirit made such Canons, and what such Men thought of themselves, and of Humane Nature, and of the History of all former Ages of the Churches. If they must be acknowledged fallible, and yet all cut off from Christ or from the Church, who say they have any Error, so much as in the said Offices, Forms, Words or Ceremonies, sure they suppose that some miraculous Power so wonderfully over-ruled fallible Men, and therefore should shew us miracles to convince us. For my part, I am far from believing, that I am so secured from Error; and therefore only say, Tho I be an unfit Judge of my Superiors Acts, I would not for all the Riches on Earth, be charged at Gods judgment with the guilt of making and justifying such Canons; much less, with all the Consequents of their Executions.

And because I am unwilling to be guilty of any dividing-errors on the other side, I have here impartially confuted them; telling those that would not have the Authors, or their former Actions so much remembered and blamed as I have done, That God is against their carnal Policies; and that it neither hath prospered, nor will do: And that when Men justifie Sin, or lay it upon God,

To the Reader.

he will with disdain cast it back upon them. As I thank God, who kept the main Body of the Religious Persons innocent, from the crimes of a few tumified Sectarian Soldiers, who by advantage subdued all the rest, (the Malignity would ruine them by a false Accusation of such a Guilt), so I will not so much as by Silence, encourage that false Malignant Accusation, nor leave the sober godly People of the Land, under the intimated Suppositions, That they Consented to the Subversion of Civil or Ecclesiastical Order and Government, when they were trod down, and suffered for their Dissent.

But in all Ages and Nations, the Churches that were under the grinding Dividers, have laid more of the blame on the upper Millstone than on the lower; Action and Violence making their Part more notable; bearing more easily the censures and words of such as think Losers may have leave to talk, than the Stings, Swords and Flames of the elder Sons of Abaddon Apollyon. And indeed, in all Ages, the lower Party have been less averse to Peace and Reconciliation; but whoever have got uppermost into uncontrollable Clergy-Domination, have usually disdained and abhorred the Peace-makers. It was King James his wisdom to make *Beati Pacifici*, his Motto; and the Disposition and Counsels that are contrary to it, will prove pernicious folly at last. But we have a greater Doctor and Exemplar, even our Saviour and final Judge, who (while some reprove such, and talk and write to bring men from Love, to hate each other), hath said, what in despite of malice he will make good [Blessed are the Peace-makers, for they shall be called the Children of God, *Matth. 5. 9*].

The

The Contents of the First Part. The Reasons of my own Communion with Parish-Churches.

Q u. 1. Whether men should be compelled to Communion with any Church by corporal Penalties? plainly answered.	p. 1, 2.
Q u. 2. Whether they who consent to communicate with some Church, may choose their own Pastor or Company; or may by force be confined to their Parish-Priest and Church?	3.
Q u. 3. For what Reasons I, and such others, do bear in, and communicate with the Parish-Churches? And whether so to do, be a sin or a duty, or a thing indifferent?	6.
The true case, and extent of my Judgment herein.	8, 11.
Twenty Four Reasons of my Judgment and Prattice, which have still seemed irresistible to my conscience.	12.
The Judgment both of the old Nonconformists and the old Separatists for it, in their own words.	18, 19.
Many Objections answered.	24.
Why I yielded to mens importunity to publish these Reasons at this time.	26.

The Contents of the Second Part; being an Account why the Twelve Arguments, said to be Dr. J. O's, do not change my Judgment.

M y Position, and premised History of the matter of Fact.	p. 1.
Dr. O's Premises considered, p. 6. Many mistakes therein manifested.	11.
His First Argument, from the want of Institution, examined.	12.
His Second Argument.	18.
His Third Argument, p. 30. And so to the Twelfth.	
Forty Errors proved in them at least.	

His laying the stress of his condemnation, not of ours only, but of all Liturgick Forms, on the ill effects of them, constrained me in faithfulness to the present endangered minds of Readers, and also to my own conscience, to say so much of the ill effects of Separation on the other side, as I know will be censured by many: But as I have oft done it before (in my Treatise of Baptism, my Gildas Salvianus, my Key for Catholicks, Admonition to Mr. Bagshaw, &c.) I judge it made necessary on this occasion, to repeat so much as I have done.

UNNECESSARY SEPARATING, disowned ; in the Reasons of the Authors Censured Pra- ctice.

§ 1. **W**HEN I see, 1. How many suffer for refusing Com-
munion with the Parish Churches. 2. And how
many are offended with Me, and such others for
Communicating with them ; censuring Us as mi-
staking compliers with Sin : The *Cause* and some
good Peoples request, invite me to answer these fol-
lowing Questions. I. Whether Men should be compelled to Communi-
cate with any Church, by Corporal Penalties ?

II. Whether they who consent to Communicate with some Church,
may chuse their own Pastor and Company, or may by force be confined
to their Parish Priest, and Church ?

III. For what Reasons I, and such others, Hear in, and Communicate
with the Parish Churches ? And whether so to do, be a *Sin*, or a *Duty*, or
a thing *Indifferent*.

§ 2. I. To the first case I answer, 1. It were happy, if the Sword could
compel *Unbelievers* to *Believe* ; but it cannot, nor is a way which *Nature*
or *Scripture* ever allowed Man to use for such an end.

2. To force an *Unbeliever* to Lie, by saying he Believeth, is a Sin.

3. An Infidel must not be Baptized till he profess with seeming Serious-
ness, and Willingness that he Believeth in God, the Father, Son, and
Holy Ghost, and will Vow and Devote himself to Him : Therefore to
force the unwilling to be Baptized, is a Sacrilegious Prophanation of Bap-
tism.

4. To be Baptized, is to be solemnly invested in a visible State of Rege-
neration, Pardon, Adoption, and Right to Christ and Life Eternal, by a
Ministerial Delivery of such Right as in the Name of Christ. But no un-
willing Person hath any Right to these unvaluable Gifts : Therefore
no unwilling Person should be forced to receive the said Investiture.

5. Christ's Tryal and Description of the *Willing*, is, Whether they re-
solve to accept of his Grace, forsaking all worldly interest that stands

against it: *Luke* 14. 26, 27, to the end. Therefore to Baptize all that are forced to it by the Sword, and had rather be Baptized, and say they Believe, than lose all they have, and lie in Gaol, is to Preach another Gospel in part

6. Persons Baptized in infancy, have no right to Communion in the Lord's Supper, till they profess their personal Faith and Consent to the Baptifmal Covenant: And the Unbaptized are not to be forced to Communicate: The Lords Supper redelivering all the same great unvaluable Gifts to the Receivers which were delivered in Baptism; the Unwilling are no more capable of one, than the other. And to force them to say they are *Willing*, and to receive that which they have no right to, is Sacrilegious prophaning Holy things.

7. The ancient Churches for many hundred years, were so far from forcing any to *Baptism* or *Church-Communion*, or thinking that they should be forced, that they admitted none that did not earnestly desire it: And if the Baptized by Impenitency, or Apostacy, or long withdrawing from Communion, did shew themselves again incapable by unwillingness, they Declaratively cast them out.

8. And that the Excommunicate, as such, should be laid up in Prison, and undone, to force them again to be *Willing* to be Christians, or to Communicate, hath the same Reasons against it, as against doing it at the first; and to take them for *Willing* and *Capable* of Absolution, and Salvation, who had rather say, they *Repent* and *Consent*, than lye in Gaol, is to pervert Christ's Gospel and Sacraments, and confound the Church: And the ancient Churches would have abhorred the motion of such a thing.

9. But it is just and meet, that Princes make a difference between Christian and Infidel Subjects; and between those that live *Willingly* in Communion of the Church, and those that refuse it: And that a Christian Kingdom should give those Powers and Immunities to willing Christians, which they give not to Infidels, and the justly Excommunicate; especially in matters relating to Government, Legislative and Judiciary, and especially about Religion, and the Church. And if any to obtain such Immunities or Powers, do Hypocritically profess Christianity, and consent, themselves only are guilty of the Prophanation, no wrong means was used, and the Church is no searcher of the Heart.

10. But Christianity being necessary to our Salvation; and it being the Christian Magistrates Duty to do his best for the Salvation of all his Subjects, and Knowledge being the means of Consent, and Teaching and Learning the means of Knowledge; it is the Duty of such Magistrates to provide sufficient Teachers for Number and Quality for all the Subjects; and to compel men to Hear, Confer, and Learn, as Catechu-
mens:

mens: The ancient Churches had their previous Instructions for such, who were yet dismissed before the Communion Exercises, proper to the faithful.

§ 3. II. To the second case I Answer; 1. There is nothing in this World that Man can do without all inconveniencies, or which may not be turned to some occasion of Evil. On one side, 1. It is most desirable that all Kingdoms were wholly Christians, and the Princes be Defenders and Promoters of Religion, and the Church and Kingdom be materially the same; and the Civil Government used Holily, according to God's Laws, to holy ends. 2. And it is desirable accordingly, that the Kingdom being *all Christian*, be divided into fit parts for Christian Conversation and Communion, such as our Parishes are, and that all be of the Church who are of the Parish, and the Civil State sanctified, and the Ecclesiastick, grow up as Body and Soul into one. And that all in the Parish be of one mind, and of one Church; and that there be no just cause given for any to separate from the rest; nor any do it without cause. 3. And it is *desirable* that all these Parish-Churches in a Kingdom living under one civil Government, do by the means of Senior Pastors and Synods, hold such Correspondence as is necessary to their common Concord and Strength.

These things being *Desirable*, it is no wonder if good Governours *Endeavour* them; and that ignorant men Plead for all such Concomitants, Subordinates and Consequents, as do *suppose* them. When as in *Fact* the case being *quite otherwise*, to administer matters on a false supposition of the *matter of Fact*; as if *that were*, which *is not*; is but like the Men of *Gothams* striving and fighting which way they should drive their Sheep, and where they should pasture them, when they had none.

1. No Kingdom is so wholly Christian as not to have many (alas, how many!) incapable of Church-Communion. 2. Yet it is a matter of order to be endeavoured, that the Country be divided into Parishes; and that they have an Ecclesiastick as well as a Civil Relation: That is, That each of these Parishes have a stated Teacher (or many) for the Catechumens, who are incapable of Communion: And that the *same Men* be the Pastors of all in that Parish who *consent*; and have the Temples and Tythes by the Magistrates Countenance and Consent: And this great advantage of Publick Countenance and Maintenance, will no doubt prevail with the main Body of Christians in that Parish, if the men be desirable or tollerable; to chuse them rather than others, to avoid discountenance

nance, and the maintaining of others : As all in the Hospital will be for the established Physician, who dare trust him with their Lives.

But if this should be carried further, to bind all persons to an absolute acceptance of such Parish Priests to be their only Pastors (under the Bishops) who are put upon them, the mischiefs would be intollerable.

For 1. Then all must accept of Papists Priests only in *France, Spain, Italy, Bavaria, Austria, &c* and of bare Readers in *Muscovy*. 2. Or else all Subjects are made Judges of the qualification of their Kings, whether they are Orthodox enough to chuse them Pastors, while they are not allowed to judge what Pastor to trust. 3. And then every ignorant, malignant, or prophan Man, who by inheritance or purchase hath got *Advowsons* or *Presentations*, hath got an advantage greatly to hinder the Salvation of all the Parish : And if Money may buy Souls for so much probability of Damnation, no wonder if the god of this World imploy many rich Merchants to purchase *Advowsons*. For how ordinarily God worketh according to the suitableness of means, Scripture and full Experience prove. If the Blind lead the Blind, both fall into the Ditch. 4. And this is quite contrary to the Ordination and bounty of our Lord, who gave men gifts for the Edification of his Church ; and our Salvation, if we may not use the publick Pastoral help of any, better than many Patrons will chuse. I would fly from that Kingdom as from a Bondage where I may use no Physician, no Tutor, no Food, but what is chosen for me by any one that can purchase such a chusing-power. And my Soul is more to me than my Body, and less in the Power of Man. And it is not the talk of a Magisterial Ranter that shall perswade me to be indifferent what Teacher I use, as if God would work by all alike.

§ 4. 2. On the other side, 1. It is of absolute necessity that every man consent before another man can do the work of a Pastor for his Soul : And God in Nature and Scripture hath ordained, that he who must be saved or damned according to the Ministers success, should be the chuser or refuser of that which so unspeakably concerneth him ; and not have his salvation more in anothers power than his own, if he be at Age, and in his Wits.

2. And yet this may be run into Extreame; and these are not easily avoided. 1. Infants (that is, all short of an Understanding, chusing Age) and Ideots and Mad-men, are half Brutes *in act*, and to be governed accordingly by force, so far as they are incapable of Reason. But these are not capable of the Church-Communion of the Adult. Yea, not only Children, but all Subjects who are not Communicants, may be forced to hear.

hear and learn as Catechumens, as is said : And they must not pretend a power to chuse their Teachers, to excuse them from all Learning : But if they say, that they can learn better of another than the Parish-Minister ; if they are able, they may remove to another Parish : If not, they must give proof that they live as Learners under some Teacher who is capable to instruct them, approved or tolerated by Authority, where Rulers own the Truth.

3. And if Communicants will be at the charge of maintaining a Pastor whom they can better trust their Souls with, than him whom the Patron chuseth for them, the Orthodox or tolerating Magistrate must see that he be not an Heretick, that doth more hurt than good ; and must keep them under the Laws of Loyalty and Peace, and see that they sow not Sedition, and revile not others under pretence of worshipping God.

4. And no men should, without necessity, lose the advantages of a publick Ministry which the most consent to, and which hath the Magistrates countenance and maintenance ; because gathering singular Churches within Parish-bounds, seems some accusation of the Parish-Minister or Church ; and such Churches are oft tempted to Envy and Censoriousness, and are usually envied and censured by others : And Unity is much of our strength and beauty. But in case of necessity it may be done.

§ 5. In short : 1. A good Ruler chusing a worthy Teacher for the Parish, will thereby do much to draw all the sober to consent to him as their Pastor.

2. Bad Rulers and Patrons chusing ignorant, unskilful, furious, malicious or scandalous Teachers, will drive those that love their souls, to chuse better for themselves, whatever it cost them.

3. Where the Ministry and Churches are so vitiated in publick, that their Communion is unlawful, there God's worship must be kept up only in other voluntary Churches.

4. Where publick Ministers or Worship are not utterly intolerable, but greatly insufficient for the preservation of Religion and good of Souls, by Disability, or unsound Doctrine, or Vice ; there the chief preservation of Religion must be in Voluntary Churches ; but so, that the Parochial be no further disowned than there is cause.

5. Where the publick Ministry and Worship are sound, but impose some unnecessary doubtful things, as conditions of Communion, in justice they bind themselves thereby to allow Voluntary Churches to such as take these terms to be sin.

6. When the Ministry, and Church-Worship, and State, are sound, and the conditions lawful, and weakness maketh conscionable Christians think otherwise, there private Churches must be tolerated, but as Hospitals for the sick, under the care of the Magistrate, keeping peace.

The strife in *England* at this day, is chiefly about the choice of Pastors, in which good people will never be indifferent: And few that I have known, refuse audience and honour to able, godly, profitable Preachers that differ from them. We are not at all of different Religions, tho some say so, to the dishonour of the National Church, as if their Forms, their Cross and Surplice, and their New Oaths and Subscriptions, were their Religion, and so their Religion were Ceremony or Novelty.

§ 6. III. As to the Third Case, [For what Reasons I, and such other join in Worship and Communion with Parish-Churches? And whether our practice be a *sin* or a *duty*, or a *thing indifferent*?] For answer, I. I shall shew what I am not pleading for. II. What it is that I hold and plead for, or defend. III. What are the Reasons of my practice. IV. Why it is that I now give out my Reasons.

§ 7. I. For the First, 1. I am far from perswading any one to commit the least sin on pretence of Concord or Communion with any Church on earth. Their damnation is just, who say, *Let us do evil that good may come*. Sin may seem to serve us for a Job, but it will be bitter in the latter end.

2. I would not have any to stretch their Consciences for Worldly Interest, to believe that Sin is no Sin, or that they may do it because it is a little one. It is no little one to him that does it wilfully for Worldly Ends.

3. If an honest Christian mistake an indifferent thing to be a Sin, I would have him do his best to get a truer apprehension: But if he cannot, I would not have him do the thing: For he that can do that which he thinks a sin, tho by mistake, can as easily commit a real sin: And it is a real sin to him: for St. Paul saith, *He that doubteth is damned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith: for whatever is not of faith, is sin*.

Qu. But is such a man a martyr, or rewardable, who suffereth for his error?

Ans.

Ans. He is rewardable as he suffereth for fearing to disobey God, and for that which is formally obedience, tho materially it was a mistaken thing. If you had a Servant who mistook your command, but died in the performance of that mistake, you would commend his fidelity: And if another that mistook you, did what you bid him by that mistake, but treacherously for hire, crossed what he thought you meant, you would take him for a perfidious knave.

Qu. But must a man then do all that he taketh to be a duty, or avoid all which he taketh for a sin?

Ans. A culpable erring judgment entangleth a man in sin, whether he follow it or not: And there is no possibility of avoiding the sin, but by using God's helps till his judgment be set right. For Conscience is not the *Maker* of the *Law*, but the *Discerner* of it: And the Law-maker changeth not his Law, because men change their thoughts of it. But while men are under a self-made necessity of sinning, the lesser sin and the greater may be distinguished, e. g. If you mis-judge it unlawful to keep a *Saints day* holy, to eat *Flesh* on *Fridays*, to use a *Cross* as a sign of Christianity, it is a greater sin to do these, than to omit them: But if you judge it unlawful to pray, or hear God's Word, or worship him, or to feed your self or children, your error is the aggravation, and no extenuation of the sin. And if you think it a duty to keep a *Fast* once a week, to wear a coarse garment, or to do any indifferent thing, it's a greater sin to omit them, than to do them: But if you take it to be a duty to lie, slander, steal, be drunk, murder, persecute, it aggravateth the sin, that both mind and practice are defiled with it.

4. I perswade no one to own the Ministry of an incapable Person; viz. one utterly Insufficient, Heretical, or Malignant; who doth more harm than good. The Conformists own this Rule, while they silence so many, and tell men, that those that have not Ordination by Diocefans, are not to be communicated with, or owned as Ministers. Both sides then confess, that *incapable* persons are not to be owned.

5. I perswade none to be indifferent in the matters which concern their souls, as *whom* they hear or chuse to be their Pastor, nor in what manner they worship God, nor to prefer any person or mode, which (all things considered) is worse before better; nor to deny themselves the great help of a learned, skilful, godly, faithful Pastor, to teach them publicly, and counsel them privately, when they may have such, merely because it is forbidden them by men, and the Patron hath chosen them another, who hath no such qualifications.

6. I am perswading none that are under the government of their Parents or Masters, to disobey them in the choice of the Pastor whom they shall ordinarily attend, as long as they perswade them to a safer choice than the Patron hath made for them.

7. I perswade none by *Profession* or *Subscription*, to justify as *true* or *good*, the least *untruth* or *evil* in the Doctrine, or Worship, or Discipline of any Church, or in any extemporate performance of the Minister.

8. I perswade no Minister to conform to the Act of Uniformity, and all the Canons.

9. I perswade none to make light of any Church-corruptions, nor to forbear endeavouring by lawful means, in their place and calling, to reform them; much less to swear or promise it, were that any where required, or to renounce any Oath as not obliging them to any thing which God had made their duty.

10. I perswade none to the sinful fear of man, or to abate Christian fortitude, constancy and patience in a good Cause, nor to be over-tender of the Flesh, or make too great a matter of their suffering. Alas! what are Worms, that in the way to the Grave they should be feared more than God? Poverty and Prisons may be as safe and near a way to Heaven, as Wealth and Liberty. None of all these are the things that I am for.

§ 8. II. That you may know the Reasons of my own practice, I shall next tell you, *what it is that my judgment is for*: which leads me to it.

And 1. I think all persons are visible Christians who are Baptized, and profess their continued consent to the Baptismal Covenant, and are not proved to have renounced or forsaken it by Word or Deed.

2. I think, that the Pastor is by Office made the Church-Judge, whether the persons Profession be understanding, serious, and credible, or not: and whether he be proved to forsake it. And if the man dissemble, or the Pastor judge falsely, it's their Sin and not mine, if I contribute not to it by omitting any Monitory duty of my own; nor is it lawful for me to usurp the Pastors judging power: Nor am I bound to know (my self) the Case and Lives of all in the Church that I joyn with; much less, where I occasionally or seldom come.

3. I think, that a tollerable man, though unduly chosen, yet after received and consented to by the Parish Communicants, is a true Pastor, supposing his own Consent : And that he and they are a true Church.

4. I hold that Christ commanded his Apostles to endeavour [*to Disciple to him all Nations, and Baptize, and Teach them,*] Mat. 28. 19, 20. And that we should pray and endeavour that the Kingdoms of the World may become the Kingdoms of the Lord, and of his Christ. And that all Christian Kings are bound to do their best, to make all their Subjects the Subjects of Christ, more than the Jewish Kings were bound to promote the *Jews* Religion : And that Christian Kingdoms are much more honourable and desirable than Christian Churches in an Heathen Kingdom : And that the Civil State and Interest should be sanctified and made religious, and more than a Shell or Body to the Religious State, as the Kernel or the Soul : And so they should be as far coherent and commensurable, as can be procured : Yet not so as to corrupt the religious state on that pretence, by crookening it to any carnal interest. The Body formeth not the Soul, nor is it to be cut meet to the Cloathes, nor the Foot fitted to the Shooe. I intreat those that be not sensible of the great importance of *National Christianity*, to read a little Book, called, *The whole Duty of Nations* (written by a Conforming Minister, who is much more Honourable by his Extraordinary Worth, than his Great Estate and Birth), which will bear down dissent by a stream of Evidence.

5. In order to the promoting of this National Concord in Religion, I have still resolved to conform to all the National Laws and Orders about Religion, which corrupt it not, nor command any sinful thing.

6. Tho I renounce all Forreign Jurisdiction, Monarchical or Aristocratical, and usurpation of an Universal Government over all the Christian World (which hath no civil or religious Universal Lawgiver or Judge but Christ, neither Monarch nor Senate being capable of it), yet I much more value the concord of the Universal Church, than of one Nation : And do more abhor doing any thing which is a sinful separation, or discord from the Church Universal : And I take the unchurching of the Universal Church to be a denying or deposing Christ.

7. All Christians must be known to be Christ's Disciples by loving one another as themselves : And love judgeth no evil till constrained.

8. Therefore I will separate from no Christian or Church without necessity, no further than they separate from Christ.

9. I do not separate from a Church meerly because I meet not with them: else I should separate from all the World, save the place where I am present: But I avoid these several degrees of sinful separation.

1. Accounting true Churches and Ministers to be none such (as the Papists do by all that have not an uninterrupted succession of Diocesan Ordination).

2. Accounting the Ministry, and Worship, and Government so bad, as makes Communion with the Church *unlawful*, if it be not so.

3. Doing that needlessly which hath the scandalous appearing signification of such a judgment.

10. I know many of the Parish-Ministers to be men of very laudable abilities and conversations, and to have the consent of the most of the Communicants of the Parish.

11. I am past doubt, that so much of the Liturgie as is used every Lords Day, as the common Worship, is so far sound as to the matter of it, that it hath no more *material* faultiness than is too often in extemporate Church-praying: And that the disorder and faultiness in the *Manner*, is no greater than is used also by many in *free prayer*, with whom we all think it lawful to joyn. And that prejudice maketh it seem to many much more faulty than it is: The greatest dislike is of the *Responses* by the *People*, and the shortness of the Prayers, both which were used in the Ancient Churches, when no sound Christians scrupled it much less separated for it. Christ approved of the short Prayer of the *Publican*, [*God be merciful to me a sinner*]. Repetitions, and the Peoples Acclamations and Responses, were used in the *Jewish Church*, as is evident in *Ezra*, and in many Psalms, &c. We all allow the Peoples speaking, even as much as the Minister in singing Psalms: And the Congregation would murmur if the People should be but Hearers while the Minister singeth alone. Of old their singing was like our *saying*, and not in Rithmes, like ours. Will any pretend to prove that it's lawful for the People to sing *God's Praise*, and not to *say it*? But they that dislike it, may be silent.

As to the Objection, that it's *unlawful to use imposed forms*; I have answered it so fully in my *Cave of Church-Divisions*, and in my *Christian Directory*, that I will here say no more, but that, 1. Every Ministers Prayer is a Form to the People, and imposed on them to joyn in putting it up to God. 2. And that it's lawful for a Child to use a Form imposed by Parents; therefore not simply evil. 3. And that we all allow imposed Forms of Catechizing, and of singing Prayers and Praise to God: And that he that said, *Speak to one another in Psalms, and Hymns, and spiritual Songs*, never meant that they must not be premeditated. 4. And many men sin by needles *impositions*, when the use of the thing imposed is no sin, but a duty.

And I am satisfied, that the Number of the Christian Churches on Earth, which worship God without a Form, far worse than ours, is so small, as that the soundness of ours is almost singular. The supposed great blemishes in the *By-Offices* about God-Fathers, Crossing, the form of Burial, and such other, the Hearers of the common Lords-day-Service have no business with. For my part, I profess I take the *ordinary Liturgy* for the best part of the publick Service in *half the Churches in England*; and had rather have it without the Sermon, than the Sermon without it, in *those Churches*.

12. I therefore take it to be my duty, as a private Hearer, 1. When I am where there is a tolerable Minister, and no other Church but the Parochial, to joyn in Worship and Communion with them constantly. 2. As a Minister on whom the Conditions in the Laws are put, to refuse some of those Conditions. 3. As an *Hearer* where the *Minister is utterly intolerable*, to do nothing which seemeth an owning him as a Minister. 4. In a place where the Parochial Ministry is the best, but a private Minister and Church is peaceable and sound, I will go ordinarily to the Parish-Church, but sometime to the weaker, if my forbearance would seem a disowning of their Communion; yea, tho it were to one that is against Infant-Baptism by mistake. 5. In a place where the private Minister and Worship is most spiritual, powerful and profitable, I would go ordinarily thither, if I may: But sometimes to a tolerable Parish-Minister and Communion, in case my not going seem to signify that I separate from their Communion, as utterly unlawful. And if I be a Preacher in a private Church, I will sometimes get another to supply my place, and go to the Parish-Church, if else my forbearance would seem to signify that I judg it unlawful. 6. I therefore take the same thing here to be lawful to one, and a fault in another, and a duty to another. Those that have far better Helps and Communion (all things considered), should not ordinarily prefer worse: And when the case differs not much, the Will of a Parent, an Husband, a Master or a Magistrate, should sway much: And where it is a duty to noted persons to go to the Parish-Church sometime, because else it will signify that they think it unlawful, an hundred Children, Servants, Wives, poor people, who are not noted or mist, and their absence is no scandal, are not bound to go at all, while they have much better Helps and Communion elsewhere. Having told you my Judgment, of which in my Two forementioned Books I have given a fuller account: I shall next add the reason of my Practice, both to satisfy those that censure me, and those that crave my help for their information; but not making my self a Judg of them that differ.

The Reasons of my Practice in Parochial-Communion.

§ 4. III. But here I am in the same streight as when I gave an account of my Nonconformity: When upon many years urgency I did but tell men what the sins were which I thought I should commit if I conformed, some said, that I made the Conformists a Faction of unconscionable perjured Villains: And if I now tell the Reasons why I joyn in the Parish-Churches, some will say, that these Reasons accuse them that do not, of the guilt of Schism and sinful suffering. But he that will perform no duty which none will be offended at, shall scarce do any in the World. My Reasons then are these:

I. I do it much for my own Edification: And who can prove my Edification unlawful? There is so sound judicious preaching in my Parish-Church where I now go, that I take it to be my considerable loss when sickness keepeth me away. And who can bind me to my loss? If a stranger give now and then a peevish ignorant flirt at such as differ from him (as those called *Arminians*, and some others use to do), I am not so thin-skinn'd as thereby to smart; nor so foolish as to raise a stir by talking against it, which by taking no notice, will go out like a Squib, which the City-Engines need not be fetcht to quench. Ignorant Preachers must have some forbearance in their Self-conceitedness and petulant Temerity, of what Sect or Faction soever they be, *Conformists* or *Nonconformists*.

II. I do it much to go as far in National Concord in Religion, as possibly I can, and for the avoiding all that makes against it. The foresaid Book, [*The whole Duty of Nations*] will convince any impartial capable Reader, of what great Duty and Advantage National Countenance and Concord is to the interest of Religion. And though it bring in multitudes of Hypocrites, God makes some use for the Church of such: I would ask the Dissenters but two Questions; 1. Would you not wish the prosperity of the Church your Selves; and that all Power and Laws promoted Godliness and true Reformation? No doubt you wish it: And would not that bring in multitudes of Hypocrites? They are like Vermin and Flies, who swarm most in the warmest Seasons.

2. If all the Hypocrites in the World should renounce Christianity, and leave none to profess it but the sincere, would not those few be left as a wonder, and a prey? O what a blow would it be to Religion in the World! Will you root out not only the Tares, but the Straw and Chaff, on pretence to save the Corn?

III. I do it to keep up Brotherly Love amongst us, which certainly censorious accusations of one another doth destroy : When you fly from them, you seem to accuse them as men incapable of your Christian Communion; and this seemeth hatred or contempt. And as sure as Fire causeth Fire, and Water quencth it ; Love causeth Love, and Hatred destroyeth it, and causeth hatred. And Christian Love is no small Duty.

IV. I do it very much to avoid the scandal of seeming to judge Parish Communion an unlawful thing, and seeming to separate from them on that account. That they err who judge it so unlawful, I am satisfied : And that scandal is a great Sin, the second Commandment, and Christ's dreadful threatening of the scandalous, and *Paul's* abhorrence of it, satisfies me. The second Commandment forbids Corporal Scandalous seeming to be Idolaters (what ever the Heart be :) And I must not seem to unchurch or sinfully censure, what ever be in my Thoughts. I know it is no such Scandal, that I go not here to the *Greek Church*, to the *French Church*, or the *Dutch Church*. For no man hath any reason to interpret it to signifie, that I separate from their Communion as unlawful : But there is great reason to interpret my total avoiding the Parish Churches, to signifie that I judge it unlawful to Communicate with them, as is evident in these Particulars.

1. There are divers Nonconforming Separatists, who have lately written to prove it unlawful.
2. Multitudes suffer much upon the publick accusations because they will not Communicate with them; who tell the people, that they take it to be Sin.
3. I, and Others, are censured by such, as Sinners for doing it.
4. Parochial Churches, are the settled National order.
5. The Laws command our joining with them.
6. The Magistrates accuse and prosecute the refusers.
7. The Parish Ministers are offended at our refusal, and accuse it as sinful separation, and so interpret it.

All this set together, maketh, it past all denial, that after all this, to avoid all Parish Communion, is by our Actions to say, that we judge it unlawful, whatever is in our Hearts : Had we all these calls to go sometimes to the *French* and *Dutch Church* (supposing that we understood them) and would not go, it were a scandalous signification, that we judge it sinful. And one may Lie by Deeds as well as by Words.

V. I take it to be a great Sin to bear false Witness against my Neighbour, and wrongfully accuse a single person : But much greater so to accuse a Church, and much more nine thousand Churches : But to say by my action that their worship of God is so sinful, that it is unlawful to join with them;

them ; is, as I think, so to accuse them. I dare not say so of an *Anabaptist*, Church.

VI. I much more dread to separate from almost all Christ's Church on Earth. For if Christ have no Church, he is no Head, King, or Saviour of it. And to say, that he accepteth not of their Worship, is to say, that he presenteth it not to God, as their *intercessor*. The Article of our Believing the *Holy Catholick Church*, and the *Communion of Saints*, is a practical Article. If there be no such *Body*, I can be no *Member* of it. And this seemeth a renouncing of my part in the Prayers of almost all the Church, when I take them to be intollerably sinful, and not accepted by God : Whereas I take it to be my great Duty, to put up no one Prayer to God, but in mental Communion with all the Church on Earth : that is, As a Member of that Society. And I would not take all the Riches of the World for my part in the Love, Prayers and Communion of the universal Church. If I cut off my self from the *Body*, I cut off my self from the *Head*, and am a withered *Branch* : to be united and baptized into *Christ*, and to the *Church*, are two effects of one action ; and so would it be to separate.

And I take it for such a Crime against Christ to say, that almost all his Church is *not His*, but *Satans* ; as it would be against the *King* to say, that almost all his Kingdoms are *none of his* but *his Enemies*. I may say, that the *Irish*, the *Highlanders*, or *Orcades*, are the most ignorant barbarous part of his Dominions ; but not that they are *none*. And a slander of almost all the Christian World, is a very great one.

But to separate from our Parrish Churches upon a Cause that is *Common* to almost all the Christian World, is *Virtually* and *Interpretatively* to separate from almost all. And to separate because of the faultiness of the Liturgy, the Ministry (in many) or the people, is to separate on a cause common to almost all.

1. The recorded Liturgies of the several Sects of Christians in the World (in the *Biblioth. Patrum*, and elsewhere) shew it evidently, that they are all far faultier than ours. All the *Abassines*, *Coptics*, *Jacobites*, *Nestorians*, *Melchites*, *Maronites*, the *Armenians*, *Georgians*, *Circassians*, *Meugrelians*, the *Greeks*, and *Muscovites*, have Liturgies far worse than ours : Let them that doubt of it, go to the *Greek-Church* in *Soboe-Fields*. The *Nestorian* Liturgy is one of the soundest and best that I find recorded (which intimateth that they are not so bad as some make them.) The *Papists* Mass, I think we are agreed is far worse. And the *Lutheran* Protestants Images, Ceremonies, Consubstantiation, shew that theirs is no better than ours.

2. And

2. And that their *Ministers* and *People* in all these *Sects* are *worse* than our *Parishes*, alas we must confess with grief.

Qu. But would you *Communicate* with all these?

Ans. I separate from none of them further than they separate from Christ. I mentally separate from the Sin that is in their Worship, and as far as I can in my own: And I locally separate from the Papists, and all such as either impose on me any Sin as the Condition, or that so corrupt their worship as to destroy it, and make it such as Christ accepteth not. And I prefer not worse before better in any. But further I separate not.

VII. I am afraid of tempting men to Infidelity and Apostacy from Christ. I know his Flock is little. But if you perswade men, that there are none on Earth whom he owneth as his Church, or accepteth their Worship, or that may be joined with, who are as faulty as our Parish-Churches; it will reduce them all to so small a Compass, as being next to none; people will easily go one step further, and deny all. To say, that the King was only King of *Windſor*, or *Brentford*, would be but a little from saying, that he is no King. Men will hardly believe, that really the Son of God did all the Wonders mentioned in the Gospel, to gather an accepted Church no bigger than the few that are better than all that Worship him according to our Liturgy. I doubt this is laying a stumbling block.

VIII. I take my self bound to disown that principle of many, who think their presence maketh them guilty of all that is faulty in the publick Worship and Ministrations: For this dissolveth all Worshipping Churches on Earth without exception. We are sure there is none that offer God a blameless Service. We must then join with none at all: Specially with those who Worship without a Liturgick Form: For we never know before-hand, but that they may say somewhat that is amiss. But in general we foreknow, that imperfect men will do all things imperfectly and faultily. And by this we must give over Praying or Worshipping in private also, being all sure to do it with sinful imperfections. But to omit it will be greater Sin.

IX. I am afraid of deceiving the Servants of Christ, and tempting them into Error, and into disaffection toward their Brethren, by making them believe, that it is unlawful to Hear, or Communicate in the Parish-Churches. If we constantly refuse such Communion when we are called to it so importunately, the people can think no less, than that we judge it to be a Sin. And so we shall be the Authors of their Error; I find already that it is so: Though many Ministers who go not to the Parish-Churches tell them, [*We take it not for a thing unlawful, but are kept away our selves by our constant preaching, as the Conformists are kept from bearing*

one another :] Yet this is not understood by many, but by their constant avoiding it, they judge them to think otherwise: And it is my Office to save them from Error and Deceit, and not to deceive them.

X. I find it necessary by practice, as well as by words, to confute those who would make the World believe, that the Non-Conformists affright men from the Parish-Churches, by making them believe that to be there is sinful; lest they should loose them from their dependance on themselves: Far be it from us to have any such design as to keep up any interest of our own, against the interest of the Church, and of Mens Souls, and by Selfishness and Deceit to draw the people into Error and Uncharitableness: It's Christ and not our Selves that we Preach.

XI. I am not willing to be guilty of the peoples suffering as Recusants. I would encourage them to patient suffering for their Duty; but not draw them into a sinful Omission of Duty to their penal suffering. I said before, that a Man may be accepted of God for a *Well-meant Action*, when the *Matter* of it is *culpable* by mistake. But I that dare not Chear or Rob men of their Money, or entice them unjustly into suretiship; dare not use the name of God and Religion knowingly, to entice many hundred honest Christians to suffer for the Omission of a Duty to God and Man.

XII. I am resolved, that I will not wilfully be guilty of hardening any in Persecution, or in sinful afflicting conscionable Christians on pretence of Laws, or Concord. And I am sure, that when they see that sufferers are deceived, and suffer for omitting a publick Duty; it is the likest way in the World, to quiet their Consciences, who afflict them, when they can say, *We punish them for their faults*; they that understand not the difference of faults, are like to justify themselves as doing well. Yea, if any shall persecute Godly Men for doing their Duty, or refusing to Sin; if they find them guilty but of one Fault or Error, it will make them think, that the rest is like it; and that shall serve to justify their persecuting Truth and Duty. And if it be so terrible to cause the stumbling of one little one, shall we cause the stumbling of any into so damning a Sin as Persecution?

Obj. *You are like to encourage men to persecution, when by your practice you intimate, that it is their duty to come to the Parish-Church, and so that they suffer for their sin.*

Ans. 1. I have shewed, that the same thing may be one man's duty which is not anothers: It is a *French-man's* duty here to go to the *French-Church*; but it is not mine.

2. What will you make of the Magistrates then? Do you think, that they take any Subject to be without Sin? Or, that they are so inhumane and worse than Heathens, as to think, that all that have any Sin, should be silenced

silenced, or forbidden to Worship God, or punished if they forbear not ? It's a Sin to sleep at Church, or to give nothing, or too little there at Collections for the Poor ; and an hundred such. And are they so severe as to send Men to Gaol, or fine them for it ? They make prophane Swearers pay but twelve pence an Oath (if any thing) and few suffer for wishing *God to Damn them*, or for being drunk, even at the time of Worship : And do you think, they will be so palpably partial, as to ruin honest Christians for praying without book ?

3. And do you consider, what your Objection implyeth ? Must I forbear that which my Conscience calleth my Duty, if another suffer for accounting it a Sin ? What if some take baptizing Infants, or sanctifying the Lords day rather than the seventh, &c. for a Sin, must I forbear these, lest I occasion their suffering ?

4. I have tryed these twenty years, and though I went to the Parish-Church, none ever suffered the more by it : Yea, I have suffered more than most here, that were of the other mind. This therefore is but a Fiction.

5. Did Mr. *Tombes* forbear Writing for Parish-Communion, lest his party the *Anabaptists* suffer ? Or did Mr. *Philip Nye* forbear writing for Hearing the Parish Ministers, lest the refusers suffer ? Or did they not both write for the Oath of Supremacy, though many *Scots* suffered for refusing it ? Yea, and therefore wrote all this that their followers might not suffer by mistake ?

XIII. I know that the main Cause of Church-Divisions, is seeking a Union on false and sinful terms : And I know that the opinion, That Parish-Communion is unlawful, is an Error ; and therefore unfit to be the Condition of our Union : And I see many would make it such a Condition. And false terms of Concord, are the great and certain means of Discord ; for the wisest Christians will refuse them : And some Impose them by *Doctrine* and *Censures*, as others do by *Laws* and *Sword*. And I will not countenance dividing terms.

Obj. *That is the chief fault of your Doctrine and Practice, That it will cause Divisions among us ; when some will do as you do, and others cannot ; and so our Congregations are divided.*

Ans. 1. Can I cause that which is caused already ? is not so much Division known still to be among us ?

2. As I said, Do not some write against the Lawfulness of Parish-Communion ? And some against Infant Baptism, and the Lords Day ? And do not they divide by *Writing against them* ? And did Mr. *Tombes* and Mr. *Nye* forbear, as aforesaid, for fear of Division ? If we are already divided in Judgment and Practice, sure giving each other an account of our reasons, is rather the way to heal us.

3. But I confels this Objection seemeth so sad and ugly to me, that it hath no small hand in urging me to what they object against. Alas, what are such come to? They that separate because of the Liturgy, Ministry, or People, do virtually separate, as I said, from almost all the Church on Earth. For it is on a cause common to almost all. Yea, not only all the Churches in the Eastern, Southern and Northern parts, and all in the West, save themselves, have Liturgies, or separate not from them. But even of the Non-conformists in *England*, those that of old, or of late have pleaded their Cause have taken the Liturgy for no sufficient cause of separation: Nay, even the old Separatists, called *Brownists*, denied not the lawfulness of forms of Prayer, nor refused to join with the Parish-Churches in our Liturgy sometimes; only they thought, that when Crossing, or such Ceremonies were used, they were bound to disown them. And shall men that separate from the Communion of almost all the Churches on Earth as unlawful, pretend that their way is the way of Unity; and that the contrary doth divide? Is our shunning Division from the Christian World, a dividing Practice? In *Holland*, Mr. *Smith* thought no man capable of Baptizing him, and so Baptized himself; and some others have done so since, thinking none fit for Communion, but the few that are their Flocks. Yet these that divided from all the World, cried down *Dividing* from themselves. But were all dividers, that were against them? This is the saddest of all Objections.

XIV. Yea, I am loth to do that which condemneth groundlesly the Reformers, the Martyrs, the Godly Conformists, the old Non-Conformists, the later, and the *Brownists* themselves, as being all for unlawful Communion.

1. If it be simply unlawful to have Communion in the Liturgy and Parish-Churches, then it was unlawful to have Communicated in their way of Worship, with *Luther*, *Zuinglius*, *Melanchton*, *Bucer*, *Pet. Martyr*, and the like Reformers: And also with the English Martyrs in *Queen Maries* daies, or in *King Edward 6.* And also with such Holy and Excellent Conformists, as *Grindall*, *Pilkington*, *Downame*, *Bolton*, *Sibbs*, *Preston*, *Usher*, and abundance more such.

2. And it's well known, that the old Non-Conformists wrote and practised against the *Brownists* in this case. The Books of *Hilderham*, *Brighman*, *Bradshaw*, *Ball*, *Paget*, *Gifford*, &c. are yet visible. Mr. *Hilderham* in his Lectures chides them that will not come to the beginning of the Common-Prayer. The old Non-Conformists begin the reasons of their Non-Conformity in refusing Subscription, in these Words, [*We protest before Almighty God, that we acknowledge the Churches of England, as they be established by publick Authority, to be true visible Churches of Christ:*

Thou

‘ That we desire the continuance of our Ministry to them above all Earthly things ; as that without which our Lives will be bitter and wearisome to us ;
 ‘ That we dislike not a set-form of Prayer to be used in the Churches : And
 ‘ finally, that whatsoever followeth here, is not set down of any evil Mind, or of
 ‘ purpose to deprave the Books of Common-Prayer, Ordination, or Homilies ; but only to shew some reasons why we cannot subscribe to all things in
 ‘ the same contained.

3. I before told you, Mr. Tombes the Anabaptist hath written at large for the Lawfulness of Parish-Church Communion : And Mr. Nye for hearing the Parish-Ministers.

4. The late Non-conformists that treated with the Bishops in 1660, and 1667. have left their Judgments fully on Record, many of them being yet alive.

5. The old Separating Brownists have these Words ; [‘ Confession
 ‘ and Protestation of Faith : Touching the true visible Political Churches
 ‘ which we acknowledge are in England ; we profess and declare, — that
 ‘ each company of true visible Christians associated together in one place, viz. a
 ‘ Parish, and Professing to serve God according to his Will, in Faith, and Order,
 ‘ so far as they know (such as there are many in England) the same is a
 ‘ true visible political Church in some respects. And therefore we communi-
 ‘ cate also with them on occasion — while in such communicating we
 ‘ countenance no evil thing in them, which in many places, and many times
 ‘ we need not do.] — Lastly, it bring no evil, nor any appearance of evil in
 ‘ us, to join to the Parish Congregation and Ministry in such respect, and so far
 ‘ forth only as aforesaid ; we ought (as we believe) sometimes on weighty
 ‘ occasion so to join ; and we sin if we do not : Luke 17. 32. Heb. 10.

25. 1 Cor. 10. 32. — We believe concerning Prayer, That though
 ‘ every form of prayer prescribed by Men, be not absolutely and simply a
 ‘ Sin, neither (as we judge) are Idols, nor an Invention of Man, nor a trans-
 ‘ gression of the second Commandment ; yet a prescribed Liturgy, or Book of
 ‘ Common Prayer by Commandment, forced on a whole Church rightly con-
 ‘ stituted, to be used still in the same Words, whenever they assemble (in com-
 ‘ parison of other praying) is not so profitable and — we judge that
 ‘ it is best and most agreeable to the last Apostolick practice, that even where
 ‘ many Pastors in one Church are, yet that One have, during Life, a precedency
 ‘ and priority in order and place (not in power) before the rest.]

I will not be more for separation than the Separatists themselves.

XV. If joining with the Parish Ministry be simply unlawful, most, or almost all England comparatively, must cease all publick Worship of God. The Nonconformists were but about two thousand, 1662. Most of them, I think, by this time are Dead, and not so many sprung up in their stead : Those that are remaining, for the most part are either in a few places quiet-

er than the rest, or hindered from any numerous Assemblies. In 1636. I do not think there were many more than we have Counties, and those few in Priviledged Chappels. And shall all the rest, even of the Religious people of the Land, give over Worshipping God in publick? I think not.

XVI. Those that blame me, do more than justifie me: They scruple not *communicating with those who bear Common-Prayer, and receive the Sacrament in the Parish Churches, in order to be Aldermen, Sheriffs, Common Councilmen, Jurors, &c.* nor pass any publick Censure on them. Yea, they communicate with such as take the Corporation Declaration, and Oath. And the said Declaration is a Profession, that [*'I do hold that there lies no Obligation on me, or any other person, from the Oath commonly called the solemn League and Covenant.'*] Here the Person justifieth all the Persons whom he never knew, in three Kingdoms, from being obliged by an Oath and Vow against Popery, Schism and Prophaness, and to repent of Sin, and to defend the King. This which constituteth all our Cities and Corporations in England, is a little more than that which constituteth our authorized Ministry and Vestries, which is but that [*there is no Obligation to endeavour any alteration of Government in the Church,*] &c. even of Lay-Chancellors governing by the Church Keys.) Therefore they that pretend that they cannot joyn with the Ministry, because they think they enter by Perjury, confute themselves, while they scruple not Communion with them that do more than the Ministry or the Vestry do. And if any shall pretend, that it is unlawful to joyn with them, because of the Common-Prayer, and at the same time freely joyn with them that take the Corporation Declaration; I do not blame them for the latter, but I must say, that they strain so partially at a gnat, as maketh me set a great deal the less by the Objections of such men. If I were never so sure that the Church and Corporations were all thus Perjured, I would greatly lament it; but it being done in ignorance (tho by men that should know) and by men that have not heard what is said against it; I would not separate from such a guilty Kingdom, no more than the faithful did for some great common Jewish corruptions. I will keep my own Soul as clear as I can: And I confess that I was ever of the mind of those Judges in Scotland, that say, that if Oaths may be taken in a Sense of our own, contrary to the usual Sense of the words; unless the Lawmakers give another, the Government will have no security by Oaths. But when I think of several Universals, (such as [*no Obligation*] [*not endeavour any Alteration.*] [*Assent and Consent to all things contained in, and prescribed by*] [*on any pretence whatsoever, as against any Commissioned,*] &c. And when I remember that to this day, I never heard a Conformist own his taking these Universals, without Limitation, universally; but in a particular Sense, and with more Limitati-

Limitations than the Earl of *Argyle* did; it doth not so much glad me, that I never took them, as it grieveth me for the *English* Clergy, who take these with such Limitations, that it falls out so unhappily, that less should be Death in *Scotland*, than they thought had been no Sin, but a Duty in *England*. But if the slur change not their Judgments, I hope it will make them pardon us, who were neither willing of the stretching Exposition or Punishment.

I dare not think that that Parliament were such men as would rather have silenced the whole Ministry, and shut up all the Churches, than have spoken a limited Sense in limited Words, or have expounded their *Universals*, if they meant not universally, if the Body of the Clergy had but let them know that it was needful: But their *Obedience* was such, as told the World that Alterations and Explications were to them unnecessary.

XVII. I would not drive the Conformists from us, by departing too far from them! By such reasons as you plead for separating from them, you will teach them to justify separating from us: Tho our faults be not the same, we are all faulty: And so we shall run away from each others, to the increase of our too great distance. Yea, experience of the contrary course encourageth me: In both the places where my Ministry was first exercised, is an honest Conformist, and a Nonconformist, (since the writing of this, one is dead, and the other is expelled,) who live in as great Love and Peace, as if there were little difference between them; the Nonconformists hearing and loving the publick Minister. If you think not this better than Church-wars, I do: And I am sure Religion there prospereth much more, than it would do by mutual avoidance.

XVIII. And truly, I am so tender of the honour of the Nonconformists, that I will do my part to keep them from reproach: And as I said before, too many are apt to judg of all their cause, by any one weakness or mistake. It was the reason why, in 1660. and 1661. when we attempted a Concord with the Bishops in vain, we never said a word against a *Form of Prayer*, nor the *most of the Liturgy*, nor *Holy-days*, nor *Kneeling at the Sacrament*, (but only against Excommunicating the faithful that scruple it) nor the *Surplice*, nor the *Ring in Marriage*, nor *laying the Hand on a Book in Swearing*, and other such; because, at least, much may be said for them; and if we laid our stress on doubtful things, many would think the rest were no other. And if we should be so weak as for the *Liturgy*, &c. to avoid all Communion with the Parish Churches as unlawful, we might flatter one another, as all Sects do, but standers by would hence judg of all the rest, and deride or pity us, as scrupulous Fanaticks, that judg not by evidence, but by prejudice and self conceit.

XIX. When

XIX. VVhen great sufferings come upon men, partiality and prejudice usually yeldeth so much to necessity, as maketh them willing to take nothing for sin which is not sin; and then they will yeild; and their change will turn to their reproach, as if it were meerly in worldly temporizing: Therefore I will at first do what is lawful.

XX. Tho I think the Covenant bindeth me to nothing but what God bound me to before, yet to that I think it doth, as a secondary bond, by my voluntary self obligation: And it binds me against *Prophaness and Schism, and all that is against sound Doctrine and Godliness*. And I cannot see but it were some degree of *Schism in me*, yea, and furthering *prophaness*, if I took all the Parish-Communion for unlawful, and would have all *England* that have no Nonconformists, nor can have, to forsake the Parochial, and soall Church-worship.

XXI. I fear the guilt of Unthankfulness to God, who hath given *England* yet a sounder Doctrine, VVorship and Churches, than most of the world.

XXII. I am not willing of that way which would injure, if not destroy the National Christianity and Reformation; and further, if not bring in, Infidelity or Popery. That Religion hath the advantage for extension to Numbers, which hath the countenance of the King and Laws, and the possession of the Parish-maintenance and Temples. To how sad a state did all the *Eastern Churches* dwindle, when they fell under the *Turks*? How doth meer tolerated Religion thrive in *France*, or any other Land where the Laws and Rulers are against it? If we lose all the Parish-Churches, some other will have them. If Protestants have them not, Papists will: And the Parochial Religion will be the National and common Religion: The most will go thither, and attend those Ministers who have the publick Authority and Maintenance: Therefore it is most evident, that they who would keep up the Protestant Religion, must do their best to keep it up in the Parish-Churches: And they that would corrupt and undermine it there, or drive or draw it thence into meer private tolerated Churches, would drive it out of the Land as National and Extensive, and let in Popery to be the National Religion: And I doubt not the Papists will be the most zealous potent helpers of all them among us who cry down a *Comprehension*; that is, the removing of the things which we account sinful, that we may live in concord (which it makes me shrug to think that ever a religious Protestant should be against, who himself counts that sin which we would have removed: As if they said, *Reform none of your publick sins, unless you will reform as much as we judg sinful, lest—*)

And doubtless it pleaseth the Papists, that (as some *Scots* refused the Oath of *Supremacy* as well as they, so) so many refuse the Parish Churches, and

and suffer as Recusants as well as they. I say as Mr. *Hunt*, There is no happiness for *England* but by an excellent Clergy, and an high (a just) esteem of them: And excellency will cause esteem.

XXIII. There be some honest moderate men of interest (if not of power) who would endeavour our reſtauration and peace, which they know muſt be principally by concord, if they could ſee that the terms were poſſible. But while ſome make them think that nothing will ſerve us but the caſting out of all the Liturgy and Church-Government, they turn their thoughts from it as an impoſſible thing: But the peruſal of the Treaty, 1669. and the Kings's Declaration, 1660. and our Agreement by the Lord Keeper *Bridgeman's* means, might have better informed them: And I will not contribute to their error.

XXIV. But I have reſerved my greateſt Motive to Parochial Communion to the laſt. I dare not condemn Jeſus Chriſt and his Apoſtles, who communicated with far more vitiated Societies: Chriſt preached daily in the Temple: He there offered according to the Law, and ſent Lepers cleaſed to the Priests to offer, tho the Prieſthood was more corrupt and degenerated than ours. The High Prieſt that ſhould have been of *Aaron's* line, was any one that could buy it with money or favour of the Heathen Romans (And ſome think there were two at once). The *Pbariſees* had corrupted ſacred Doctrines and Worſhip, and the *Sadduces* were far worſe than the *Mahometans*; yet Chriſt did ordinarily joyn in the Synagogues: and had he not joyned in their Liturgy, as the reſt, he would have been noted for a Diſturber, and the Rulers would not have called him to preach, as they did others: See *Luke* 4. 16. and 6. 6. *John* 5. 59. and 18. 20. *Matth.* 12. 9. and 13. 54. *Mark* 1. 21, 31. and 6. 2. We find Chriſt bidding men, Take heed of the leaven of the *Pbariſees*, but yet to bear them (delivering the Law) in *Moses chair*. They accuſed him for not ſeparating more from *Publicans* and *Sinners*, but not for ſeparating from the Temple or Synagogues: He told his Diſciples, that men ſhould caſt them out of the Synagogues, but never bid them depart themſelves.

And I find *Peter*, *Acts* 10. ſcrupling Communion with the *Gentiles*, till God rebuked him; and *c.* 11. the *Jewiſh* Chriſtians offended at it, till convinced; and *Gal.* 2. *Paul* reproving him to his face for withdrawing from the *Gentiles*, leſt he ſhould offend the *Jews*.

And *Paul* would not himſelf have conformed ſo far as to circumciſe *Timothy*, and to ſhave his head for his Vow, and purifie himſelf in the Temple, had it been unlawful. It was done by the ſame Votes (*James*, and the reſt at *Jeruſalem*) who made the Decrees, *Acts* 15. And if you ſay, *Paul*, and all theſe, did unlawfully, you will ſhake our foundation. He profeſſed to become a *Jew* to the *Jews*, and all things to all men, to ſave ſome. This moveth me above all.

§ 10. But it is objected, 1. *That it is in vain to come so near the Prelates, For nothing will satisfie them, or procure us the least abatement of their cruelty, unless you will do all that is imposed.*

Ans. 1. It is not to satisfie such as you describe, that I do what I do: It is to satisfie my own Conscience in obeying God.

2. If but any one of all the forementioned Reasons hold good, it is not in vain, tho it satisfie not the implacable. Do you think I go to worship God only to *satisfie* men? I daily receive that benefit to my self, which assureth me that it is not in vain.

Obj. 2. *You that come so near them, please them no better, and you have suffered with the first.*

Ans. 1. Had I done it to escape suffering, I would have done that which I suffered for not doing, and not done that which I suffered for. But all that I have ever suffered from men, is but a Flea-biting to that which I suffer from the Diseases of my own Soul and Body: and yet I can love and forgive my self.

2. If I suffer for the acts of Piety, Love and Peace, it is for righteousness: And then Christ hath commanded me exceedingly to rejoyce, *Mat. 5. 10, 11.* But if I suffer for sinful censoriousness and division, what will be my comfort?

3. I doubt not but I much more displease the Papists by my course of Communion, than they do, who by unjustifiable Opinions, do make their cause indefensible, and expose themselves to their triumph.

Obj. 3. You grieve many good people of the contrary mind.

Ans. No doubt of it: So I have done most good people whose mistakes I ever sought to cure (about *Antinomianism*, *Baptism*, and the rest). But I please those good people who think as I do.

2. Compare these Two sorts together: How vast a number do the contrary minded censure? They think all our late Parliaments to sin in their Communion, even these last which they most praise: Mr. *Hunt* challengeth their Accusers to name any Number of them all that conform not: I have not heard of Three (if of any One) that is liable to the charge of Recusancy, and hath not communicated in the Parish-Churches.

They accuse also all the *Common-Council*, since changed; and in a word, almost all the Christian World: And yet we can easily forgive them, and *forget* them: And if they cannot bear *with us*, if we obey our Consciences, and give them the Reason of it; yea, if we had told them why we judg them to be mistaken,

mistaken, and to sin, they will shew so much partiality and self-esteem, and so much impatient tenderness of themselves, as will too much harden their Accusers.

Obj. 4. Many Learned good men do differ from you.

Ans. I think a thousand to one through the World differ from them.

Obj. 5. It will save none from suffering, there being so many other Laws against them.

Ans. It is my duty to save men from mistakes and sinful censure and suffering for mistakes: and so it may save me from the guilt of Omision.

Obj. 6. It is but Man's Law which you suppose maketh it a duty.

Ans. 1. I make not light of the Laws of men about lawful things: But your supposition is not true: Were there no Law for it but God's, it is my duty.

Obj. 7. Somebody will answer you, and so it will cause strife.

Ans. Do, or must all men forbear giving a Reason of their Judgment and Practice to those that think them sinful? yea, or to confute the mistakes of others, for fear of being censured? Will you censure us, and must not hear our Reasons? Are you so much worse than Lawyers, that can plead without breach of Charity? May not friendly debates beat out the truth to our mutual edification? No truths are so clear to us, before they are controverted, usually, as after. Reproach not the Nonconformists, as if they could not bear contradiction.

Obj. 8. Your Cure of Church-Divisions did increase Divisions.

Ans. The Disease then is very far gone, if the Remedy increase it: But I have cause to believe that it healed many. But I confess, as the Books by which I drew off many *Anabaptists*, did increase Division from their Party, by ceasing the Divisions from the Church; so it may be here.

Obj. 9. But if men believe it lawful to go to the Parish-Churches, they will come to your Assemblies no more.

Ans. 1. Experience confureth this: I think most who hear me, do think it lawful, and oft go thither. 2. I have oft told them publicly, That I desire none of them to hear me, who do not need my help: If they have room, and sufficient helps in the Parish-Churches, I had rather they would not take up, with us, the room which others should have who truly need our help. If nothing bring them to me, but an Opinion, that it's sin to joyn with the *Common-Prayer*, I will do my best to drive them from me. But if any cannot have room elsewhere, or cannot overcome the foresaid mistake (of the sin of hearing the Parish-Minister)

ster). I will give them the best help I can: And if any live where publick hearing is *but lawful*, and they truly need more suitable help, the bare *lawfulness* of hearing elsewhere, will never keep away those persons who feel their need of better, and the benefit, no more than it will make them forsake better Cloathing, good Physick, or Estate, because a worse is sometime lawful.

Obj. 10. *But why do not you conform, if you can communicate with them?*

Ans. 1. Why cannot I be carnal, contentious, drink too much at the Sacrament, if I could have communicated with the Church of *Corinth* that had such? Why did not Christ commit the Synagogue-fins, if he could communicate in the Synagogues? The persons who put this question, disgrace themselves by judging of things which they understand not. If they know not what more is in Ministers Conformity, than in joyning as private persons in the Parish-Worship, let them read my first *Plea for Peace*, and they may know.

I will joyfully conform, I. If they will impose on us no *useful Oaths, Covenants, Promises, Subscriptions, Declarations or Practices*.

II. I would rejoice in the Reformation, if while some essentiate a Church by a Bishop, they would restore the Parishes to be Churches, which they make but *Parts* of the lowest Churches, as Chappels are, and make the Parish-Ministers Pastors again, whom they have degraded to be but Half-Pastors, or Curates to the lowest Pastors.

III. I would hope, that we might yet escape back-sliding into Popery, if that part of the Clergy never govern the Ship, who are not content with a National Government, but make it our necessary duty, as against Schism, that all come under a *Forreign Jurisdiction*: And if the true Protestant Clergy will joyn in the renunciation of that Jurisdiction (but not of Communion with Forreign Churches).

§ 11. IV. *Why I publish my Reasons at this time*

Ans. 1. Because I think I have an urgent cause to endeavour to save some from the guilt of *Persecution*: And if I note the mistakes of *One side only*, I shall be justly charged with partiality.

2. Because

2. Because mens censure of my practice, as sinful, doth continue: And I owe them an account of the Reasons of it.

3. Dr. *Stillingsfleet*, and such others, would make the World believe, that we defend that Separation which by word and practice we have long opposed: And we owe fuller satisfaction to them, and to such as they misinform.

4. I am much obliged to rectifie mens mistake of the Reason, why many Nonconforming Ministers here come not to the Parish Churches: Many were agreed to come, when the *Oxford Act* of Confinement coming out, prevented it: For to have appeared in the Churches, would have exposed them to Six months imprisonment for being in the City. And since then, the same Reason hindereth many, which keepeth Conformists from communicating with each other, even their own labours at home. But many do go to the Churches in publick, and I conjecture others hereafter will get their Places sometime supplied by others, that they may go: For most of my acquaintance hold it lawful, as far as I can judg.

5. I would stop them that censure, as sinners, unjustly, the late *Parliaments*, the *Common-Council*, *Jurors*, and all the good Christians throughout all the Kingdom who differ from them, and that have no Ministers but Conformists.

6. I remember why Mr. *Jo. Ball* wrote against Separation just when Reformation was intended: Many thought it unreasonable, but it proved otherwise by the sad effects which he would have prevented.

7. I cannot forget what this mistake hath wrought in *England*, from 1641, to 1660. which I will not further recite, but only say, That when there was neither Bishops, nor their Courts, nor Liturgy, nor Ceremonies imposed on them, separate Assemblies were as numerous, and as much and more pleaded for, than now, and managed with too much strife; and reconciling and Unity was much resisted by that side.

8. I am bound to have real compassion on the multitudes who suffer as for Recusancy, and not by silence wrong their Consciences and their PurSES. If I shut up the bowels of my compassion, where is the love of God?

9. I am bound to do my best to keep out Popery; which must be by keeping up as much of Religion as is possible in the Parish-Churches (that it be not first thrust into corners, and then out of the Land), and by concord with the Parish-Ministers who are honest: And many such, through God's mercy, there are; tho those that in 1661. brought us into this state, do manifest no repentance.

10. Lastly, I find that our mutual Censures and Separations greatly hinder the success of the whole Ministry against sin, while they seek to bring each other into disesteem, and teach the people to disesteem them all; and some will not hear one sort, and some the other.

The rest of my Reasons, you may gather from the fore recited Reasons of my Practice. § 12. I confess, that *ad hominem*, the Canons Excommunicating us, may stop the mouths of the severe Canonists, if they accuse us: Would they not have us take their Canons to signify their will, concerning the extent of their Church-Communion? Or, would they have Excommunicate persons come to Church? All that do but own Non-conformity by a word, are *ipso facto* Excommunicate, till they publicly repent of it as a wicked Error. And their Writers damn those as Schismatics, that obey them not: And so consequentially all that they call *Indifferent*, and *Impose*, are made necessary by some men to Salvation. I hate this at my heart: But yet it is not all the Parish-Ministers that like these Excommunicating Canons. And they are not bound to reject me till the Fact be proved; and I am not bound to do Execution on my self; but I am bound to all Offices for Love and Concord.

I doubt not but some of the Excommunicating Clergy, will set these two Writings against each other, and say, as their Tutor and Advocate doth., that *R.* is against *B.* and that I am hardly reconcilable with my self; but if goggle Eyes judge each line to be a yard distant from another, I cannot cure them, but I can bear their Disease and the effects

And if any will make use of my detection of the mistakes of conscientious peaceable Christians in some matters of Communion, to have a pretence to revile and persecute them, I enter my Protestation before God against them; and warn them to remember, that while they condemn others for Infirmities of so small a degree as few men are free from, they raise up matter of terror to their own Consciences when awakened, who have so much more heinous Sin to answer for before a holy dreadful God: even those *little ones* of whose scandalizers and neglecters Christ spake so terribly, were none of them without some Sin; Though *Paul* and *Barnabas* differed to a parting, neither of them was silenced for it, nor called a Schismatick.

If all shall be *ipso facto* Excommunicated, who have far greater Sin than humbly and peaceably saying, *There is something sinful in some part of the Liturgy, Ceremonies, Articles, Subscription, or in some that bear office in the Church as to Government*; I am past all doubt that there will no one living, either Prelate, or Priest, Lord, or Peasant, be left to be a Member of their Church; and that by parity of reason, they have Excommunicated every person

person in the land ; however the predominancy of their Wills and Interests above the Will of Christ, and the interest of the Church and Souls, may still bewitch them into a confidence, that those are the worst Men who most cross their carnal will and interest ; and that the most ungodly are fitter for their Church Communion than they.

Psal. 14. 4. Have all the workers of Iniquity no Knowledge, who eat up my people as they eat bread, and call not upon the Lord?

Acts 28. 30, 31. And Paul dwelt two whole years in his own hired house (at Rome) and received all that came in unto him, Preaching the Kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ, with all confidence, no man forbidding him.

1 Thes. 2 15, 16. Who both killed the Lord Jesus Christ, their own prophets, and have persecuted us, and they please not God, and are contrary to all men ; forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles, that they might be saved, to fill up their sins alway : For the wrath is come upon them to the uttermost.

James 5. 7. Be patient, Brethren, unto the coming of the Lord.

And if both sides call me worse than I am, for these displeasing Admonitions, I say, as St. Paul, Gal. 1. 10. *If I yet pleased men, I should not be the Servant of Christ.*

1 Cor. 4. 3, 4. With me it is a very small thing, that I should be judged of you, or of mans judgment. — He that judgeth me is the Lord.

Senec. Nemo pluris virtutem aestimat, quam qui boni viri famam perdidit, ne virtutem perderet.

Jan. 10. 1680.